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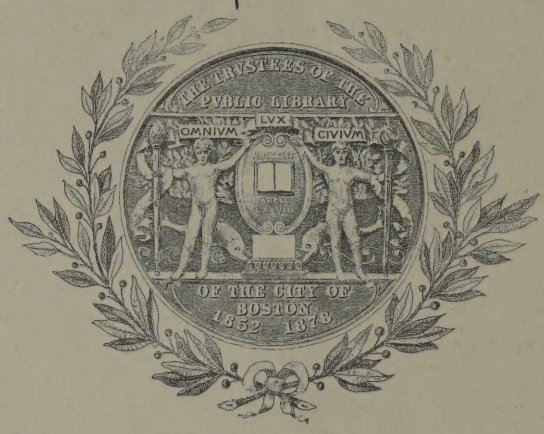

GIVEN BY

E. G. Allen

UNITED STATES. No. 1 (1896).

Complimentary

CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

QUESTION OF THE BOUNDARY OF BRITISH GUIANA.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
February 1896.

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E. L. Allen,
March 7, 1896,
B

Correspondence respecting the Question of the Boundary of British Guiana.

No. 1.

Mr. Phelps to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 9.)

My Lord, *Legation of the United States, London, February* 8, 1887.

I HAVE received instructions from my Government to make to your Lordship a communication in its behalf on the subject of the dispute which it is informed has arisen between Her Majesty's Government and that of Venezuela touching the boundary-line which separates that country from British Guiana.

I am instructed to tender to Her Majesty's Government the good offices of the United States to promote an amicable settlement of the respective claims of Great Britain and Venezuela in the premises, and the arbitration of the United States' Government in respect to the questions involved, which are understood only to refer to historical facts, should such arbitration prove acceptable to both parties.

In the instructions above mentioned the Secretary of State for the United States observes as follows:—

"Her Majesty's Government will readily understand that the attitude of the United States' Government of friendly neutrality and entire impartiality touching the merits of the controversy . . . . is entirely consistent and compatible with the sense of responsibility that rests upon the United States in relation to the South American Republics. The doctrines we announced two generations ago, at the instance and with the cordial support and approval of the British Government, have lost none of their force or importance in the progress of time, and the Government of Great Britain and the United States are equally interested in conserving a status the wisdom of which has been demonstrated by the experience of more than half-a-century.

"It is not supposed for a moment that any idea of political or territorial expansion of authority on the American Continent can control Her Majesty's counsellors in any action they may take in relation to Venezuela. The declarations of Great Britain in the past, her just and honourable disposition of the Bay Islands questions on the lines of harmonious understanding with the United States, and her evident policy at the present day, negative any such conjecture. The dispute with Venezuela is merely one of geographical limits and title, not of attempted political jurisdiction. So believing, what can be more natural than for us to assume that Her Majesty's Government is now, as heretofore, earnestly inclined to accept our friendly suggestions, and, if need be, to avail of the offer of impartial co-operation of the Government of the United States in the interest of that peace and harmony in the Western Hemisphere which the two nations have for so long a period co-ordinately and with mutual consideration maintained?

"It is deemed unnecessary to emphasize more fully the desire felt by those charged with the administration of this Government, not only to avoid all action tending to the embarrassment of Her Britannic Majesty's interests in any quarter, but in a wise and broad spirit to promote their prosperity, in the full assurance that our motives will be recognized, and such action will be productive of mutuality."

I need add to the language of the Secretary of State no further assurance of the satisfaction that will be felt by the United States' Government if it shall perceive that its wishes in this regard are permitted to have influence with Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. J. PHELPS.

No. 2.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Phelps.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 22, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, tendering the good offices of the United States to promote a settlement of the dispute which has arisen between Her Majesty's Government and that of Venezuela with regard to the boundary-line between that country and British Guiana, and suggesting the arbitration of the United States' Government in respect to the historical facts involved.

Her Majesty's Government fully appreciate the friendly feelings which have prompted your Government to offer their mediation in this matter. The attitude, however, which General Guzman Blanco has now taken up in regard to the question at issue precludes Her Majesty's Government from submitting those questions at the present moment to the arbitration of any third Power.

An offer to mediate in the questions at issue between this country and Venezuela has already been received by Her Majesty's Government from another quarter, and has been declined on the same grounds.

I beg that you will convey to the Secretary of State the cordial thanks of the Queen's Government for your communication, and that you will inform him that they have not yet abandoned all hope of a settlement by direct diplomatic negotiations with Venezuela.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 3.

Mr. Lincoln to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 6.)

My Lord, *Legation of the United States, London, May* 5, 1890.

AS I had the honour to intimate to your Lordship verbally to-day, I have been instructed by my Government to tender to Her Majesty's Government the earnest good offices of the United States with a view to bringing about a resumption of the interrupted diplomatic relations between Her Majesty's Government and that of Venezuela, as a preliminary step towards negotiations for the amicable settlement by arbitration of the long-standing questions respecting the boundary-line between Venezuela and British Guiana.

It is now more than three years since, at the time when diplomatic relations had just been broken off, your Lordship stated to my predecessor that Her Majesty's Government were for the time precluded from submitting the questions at issue to the arbitration of any third Power, and expressed the continuing hope of a settlement by direct diplomatic negotiations with Venezuela; and the Secretary of State of the United States feels that a propitious time has arrived for endeavouring to promote a settlement of the questions at issue, in view of the emphasis which has just been given to the principle of international arbitration by the joint proposals of Great Britain and the United States to Portugal.

I am accordingly instructed to suggest to your Lordship that an informal conference of Representatives of Great Britain, Venezuela, and the United States be had, either in Washington or London, with a view to reaching an understanding on which diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela may be resumed, the attitude of the United States therein being solely one of impartial friendship towards both parties to the dispute in question.

Renewing the assurance of the great satisfaction which would be felt by my Government in a successful exercise of its good offices in this matter, I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT T. LINCOLN.

No. 4.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Lincoln.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 26, 1890.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 5th instant stating that you had been instructed by pour Government to tender to Her Majesty's Government the earnest good offices of the United States with a view to bringing about a resumption of the interrupted diplomatic relations between Her Majesty's Government and that of Venezuela, as a preliminary step towards negotiations for the amicable settlement by arbitration of the long-standing questions respecting the boundary-line between Venezuela and British Guiana.

Her Majesty's Government are very sensible of the friendly feelings which have prompted this offer on the part of the United States' Government. They are, however, at the present moment in communication with the Venezuelan Minister in Paris, who has been authorized to express the desire of his Government for the renewal of diplomatic relations, and to discuss the conditions on which it may be effected.

The rupture of relations was, as your Government is aware, the act of Venezuela, and Her Majesty's Government had undoubtedly reason to complain of the manner in which it was effected. But they are quite willing to put this part of the question aside, and their only desire is that the renewal of friendly intercourse should be accompanied by arrangements for the settlement of the several questions at issue.

I have stated to Señor Urbaneja the terms on which Her Majesty's Government consider that such a settlement might be made, and are now awaiting the reply of the Venezuelan Government, to whom he has doubtless communicated my proposals.

Her Majesty's Government would wish to have the opportunity of examining that reply and ascertaining what prospect it may afford of an adjustment of existing differences before considering the expediency of having recourse to the good offices of a third party.

I may mention that, in so far as regards the frontier between British Guiana and Venezuela, I have informed Señor Urbaneja of the willingness of Her Majesty's Government to abandon certain portions of the claim which they believe themselves entitled in strict right to make, and to submit other portions to arbitration, reserving only that territory as to which they believe that their rights admit of no reasonable doubt. If this offer is met by the Venezuelan Government in a corresponding spirit, there should be no insuperable difficulty in arriving at a solution. But public opinion is, unfortunately, much excited on the subject in Venezuela, and the facts of the case are strangely misunderstood.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 5.

Mr. Lincoln to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 30.)

My Lord, *Legation of the United States, London, May* 28, 1890.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's note of the 26th instant with respect to the negotiations now in progress for the resumption of diplomatic relations between this country and Venezuela, and I beg to acquaint you that I have lost no time in forwarding a copy of the same to my Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT T. LINCOLN.

No. 6.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir J. Pauncefote.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 11, 1891.

MR. LINCOLN in taking leave of me, previous to a journey to Italy, took occasion to renew on the part of his Government the expression of a hope that we would refer to arbitration our boundary differences with the Republic of Venezuela.

I replied that we were very willing to submit to arbitration all the questions which seemed to us to be fairly capable of being treated as questions of controversy. There was considerable difficulty, however, I was aware, in devising any formula of reference which should be satisfactory to both sides. At present, the principal obstacle to a continuance of the discussion was the diplomatic position in which the Venezuelan Government had thought fit to place the two countries. Of their own accord they had broken relations between Great Britain and Venezuela. Before we could resume negotiations, we must be satisfied that those relations were about to be renewed, and that the relative attitude of the two countries was such as would justify us in a confidence that the renewed relations were likely to be maintained.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 7.

The Earl of Rosebery to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 27, 1892.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 22nd ultimo, forwarding the 34th Bulletin of the Bureau of American Republics on the subject of Venezuela, which you have received from the United States' Government.

As their publication appears to be official and to have been officially communicated to you, I must request you to inform the United States' Government that Her Majesty's Government are unable to admit the correctness of the map of Venezuela which appears at p. 122, nor can they admit as correct either the description of the limits of the Republic, or the history of the boundary question between Great Britain and Venezuela, as given in Chapter I of this Bulletin.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 8.

Mr. Herbert to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received September* 26.)

My Lord, *Newport, Rhode Island, September* 12, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I addressed a note to the United States' Government, in the sense of your Lordship's despatch of the 27th ultimo, in regard to the recently published Bulletin of the Bureau of American Republics on the subject of Venezuela, and I have now received a note from Mr. Foster, in reply, copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith, in which he states that the use by the Bureau of American Republics of a map issued by a reputable firm of map publishers cannot be regarded as a judgment by that Bureau in regard to the disputed boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana, much less by the Department of State, which does not supervise the publications of the Bureau.

Although Mr. Foster disclaims any responsibility for the publications of the Bureau of American Republics, they are certainly considered to be official documents, and they are printed in the United States' Government printing office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Mr. Foster to Mr. Herbert.

Sir, *Department of State, Washington, September* 8, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your note of the 6th instant, by which you inform me that, attention having been drawn to the recently published

Bulletin of the Bureau of American Republics on the subject of Venezuela, Her Majesty's Government are unable to admit the correctness of the map of Venezuela which appears at p. 122 of that work, nor can they admit as correct either the description of the limits of the Republic, or the history of the boundary question between Great Britain and Venezuela, as given in Chapter I.

This Government has not been called upon to express a judgment as to the correctness of any particular boundary which may be claimed to exist between British Guiana and the Republic of Venezuela. If among the many maps of more or less official character extant on both sides, showing widely variant boundary-lines, the Bureau of American Republics has made use of one issued by a reputable firm of map publishers, that circumstance could hardly be regarded as a judgment of the subject-matter in dispute by that Bureau, much less by this Department, which does not exercise a supervision over the publications of the Bureau.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN W. FOSTER.

No. 9.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir J. Pauncefote.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 23, 1895.

ON the 25th ultimo the United States' Ambassador referred in conversation to the dispute between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Venezuela with regard to the boundary of British Guiana, and said that his Government would gladly lend their good offices to bring about a settlement by means of an arbitration.

I explained to Mr. Bayard that Her Majesty's Government had expressed their willingness to submit the question, within certain limits, to arbitration, but that they could not agree to the more extensive reference on which the Venezuelan Government insisted. At his Excellency's request I promised to communicate to him a Memorandum on the present position of the matter, and to show him a map setting out the points in dispute.

Mr. Bayard called here again on the 20th instant, and, in pursuance of my promise, I read to him the Memorandum, of which a copy is inclosed for your Excellency's information, and showed him a map of the territory in dispute. I told his Excellency that the Venezuelans had recently made an aggression upon the territory in our occupation, and had, according to the reports which had reached us, ill-treated some of the colonial police stationed there.

On Mr. Bayard observing that the United States' Government were anxious to do anything in their power to facilitate a settlement of the difficulty by arbitration, I reminded his Excellency that, although Her Majesty's Government were ready to go to arbitration as to a certain portion of the territory, which I had pointed out on the map, they could not consent to any departure from the Schomburgk line.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Memorandum on the Venezuelan Boundary Question read to the Ambassador of the United States, dated February 20, 1895.

THE readiness of Her Majesty's Government to discuss this question in a friendly spirit has been shown by the fact that although the Government of Venezuela broke off relations with Her Majesty's Government in 1887, and have as yet offered no apology for their conduct, yet informal Representatives of Venezuela have three times been received at the Foreign Office with a view to preliminary negotiations on the question of boundary.

The negotiations between the two Governments for the settlement of the disputed

boundary which have taken place during the last fifty years have led to no result, because Venezuela has insisted on maintaining a claim extending beyond the River Essequibo and including a large portion of long-settled districts of the Colony of British Guiana.

On the other hand, Great Britain has throughout been prepared to make large abatements from her extreme claim, although Her Majesty's Government have been continually accumulating stronger documentary proofs of the correctness of that extreme claim as being their inheritance from their Dutch predecessors.

When, therefore, persistent attempts at encroachment by Venezuela, and the increasing demand for the due exercise of jurisdiction within the western districts of the Colony of British Guiana, made it impossible to leave the question of boundary quite uncertain, Her Majesty's Government in 1886 decided to proclaim what is known as the Schomburgk line as the minimum limit of their jurisdiction and of their territorial claim, and that line has since been treated as the provisional boundary of the Colony. This is the boundary which has lately been violated in a marked manner by the Venezuelans.

Her Majesty's Government have consistently declined, and still decline, to submit to arbitration the question of the right to territory long settled and governed as part of a British Colony, nor are they now prepared to accept any material modification of the provisional boundary proclaimed in 1886.

On the other hand, they have offered to concede to Venezuela without arbitration a large portion of the territory comprised in their extreme claim, and they are ready to go to arbitration respecting an intermediate zone, as to the exact limit of which they would be prepared to accept modifications having a proper regard to natural boundaries.

These views of Her Majesty's Government have been communicated to the Government of Venezuela in 1890, and again in 1893. To the last of those communications no answer has been returned.

No. 10.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir J. Pauncefote.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 20, 1895.

THE United States' Ambassador asked me to-day if I could give him any further information as to the differences between this country and Venezuela.

I said I could add nothing to the Answer which Sir E. Grey had given in the House of Commons.*

Her Majesty's Government were awaiting a communication from the Government of Venezuela, but they would certainly require redress for the outrages com-

* Extract from Hansard, p. 2, March 11, 1895 :—

Sir G. Baden-Powell (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether officers and members of the British Guiana police last winter were attacked by Venezuelan armed forces, seized, and carried into Venezuelan territory from British territory; whether he can state what has happened to these British subjects, and when they were enabled to return to their homes; whether the Venezuelan Government have offered any explanation; and what steps the Government propose to take to arrange the questions in dispute which give rise to such international complications.

Sir Edward Grey: Some officers and members of the British police force were seized on the right bank of the River Cuyuni and taken to a Venezuelan station at El Dorado early in January. They were released on the 20th January, and all of them have now returned to Demerara. The Government of Venezuela have summoned the General Commissioner on the Cuyuni and the Military Commander to Carácas to give explanations, and have appointed a Special Commission to investigate the matter. Her Majesty's Government will wait for a reasonable time to hear what is the result of the inquiry instituted by the Government of Venezuela before they determine what reparation should be required.

March 14, 1895 :—

Mr. A. Cross (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government are now represented at Carácas with the Republic of Venezuela; and, if so, what steps, if any, are being taken to bring about a *modus vivendi* for the settlement of disputes now pending?

Sir Edward Grey: Her Majesty's Government have no diplomatic Representative in Venezuela, but British interests in that country are in charge of the German Representative at Carácas. Her Majesty's Government are, and always have been, ready to come to an amicable arrangement with the Venezuelan Government for the settlement of pending disputes, and their views on the subject were communicated to that Government in 1890 and again in 1893, to the latter of which communications no answer has been returned. Her Majesty's Government must therefore maintain the provisional boundary proclaimed in October 1886. This boundary does not embrace their whole claim, and the Venezuelan Government have more than once been informed that Her Majesty's Government are willing to submit the right to certain territory outside this boundary to arbitration.

mitted by Venezuelan soldiers on District Inspector Barnes and other British subjects.

Mr. Bayard suggested that it might be advantageous that Venezuela should send a Special Envoy to discuss the boundary question. He thought that that had been done on more than one occasion.

I said I did not remember exactly what had taken place as to sending a Special Envoy here, but that diplomatic relations had been broken off in 1887 by the Venezuelan Government, who had given the British Minister his passports.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 11.

Mr. Olney to Mr. Bayard.—(Communicated to the Marquess of Salisbury by his Excellency Mr. Bayard, August 7.)

Sir, *Department of State, Washington, July* 20, 1895.

I AM directed by the President to communicate to you his views upon a subject to which he has given much anxious thought, and respecting which he has not reached a conclusion without a lively sense of its great importance, as well as of the serious responsibility involved in any action now to be taken.

It is not proposed, and for the present purposes is not necessary, to enter into any detailed account of the controversy between Great Britain and Venezuela respecting the western frontier of the Colony of British Guiana. The dispute is of ancient date, and began at least as early as the time when Great Britain acquired, by the Treaty with the Netherlands of 1814, "the establishments of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice." From that time to the present the dividing line between these "establishments" (now called British Guiana) and Venezuela has never ceased to be a subject of contention. The claims of both parties, it must be conceded, are of somewhat indefinite nature. On the one hand, Venezuela, in every Constitution of Government since she became an independent State, has declared her territorial limits to be those of the Captaincy-General of Venezuela in 1810; yet, out of "moderation and prudence," it is said, she has contented herself with claiming the Essequibo line—the line of the Essequibo River that is—to be the true boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana. On the other hand, at least an equal degree of indefiniteness distinguishes the claim of Great Britain. It does not seem to be asserted, for instance, that in 1814 the "establishments" then acquired by Great Britain had any clearly-defined western limits which can now be identified, and which are either the limits insisted upon to-day, or, being the original limits, have been the basis of legitimate territorial extensions. On the contrary, having the actual possession of a district called the Ponaron district, she apparently remained indifferent as to the exact area of the Colony until 1840, when she commissioned an engineer, Sir Robert Schomburgk, to examine and lay down its boundaries. The result was the Schomburgk line, which was fixed by metes and bounds, was delineated on maps, and was at first indicated on the face of the country itself by posts, monograms, and other like symbols. If it was expected that Venezuela would acquiesce in this line the expectation was doomed to speedy disappointment. Venezuela at once protested, and with such vigour and to such purpose that the line was explained to be only tentative—part of a general boundary scheme concerning Brazil and the Netherlands, as well as Venezuela—and the monuments of the line set up by Schomburgk were removed by the express order of Lord Aberdeen. Under these circumstances, it seems impossible to treat the Schomburgk line as being the boundary claimed by Great Britain as matter of right, or as anything but a line originating in considerations of convenience and expediency. Since 1840 various other boundary-lines have from time to time been indicated by Great Britain, but all as conventional lines—lines to which Venezuela's assent has been desired, but which in no instance, it is believed, have been demanded as matter of right. Thus, neither of the parties is to-day standing for the boundary-line predicated upon strict legal right—Great Britain having formulated no such claim at all, while Venezuela insists upon the Essequibo line only as a liberal concession to her antagonist.

Several other features of the situation remain to be briefly noticed. The continuous growth of the undefined British claim, the fate of the various attempts at arbitration of the controversy, and the part in the matter heretofore taken by the United States. As already seen, the exploitation of the Schomburgk line in 1840 was at once followed by the protest of Venezuela and by proceedings on the part of Great Britain which could fairly be interpreted only as a disavowal of that line. Indeed—in addition to the facts already noticed—Lord Aberdeen himself in 1844 proposed a line beginning at the River Moroco, a distinct abandonment of the Schomburgk line. Notwithstanding this, however, every change in the British claim since that time has moved the frontier of British Guiana farther and farther to the westward of the line thus proposed. The Granville line of 1881 placed the starting-point at a distance of 29 miles from the Moroco in the direction of Punta Barima. The Rosebery line of 1886 placed it west of the Guiama River, and about that time, if the British authority known as the "Statesman's Year Book" is to be relied upon, the area of British Guiana was suddenly enlarged by some 33,000 square miles—being stated as 76,000 square miles in 1885, and 109,000 square miles in 1887. The Salisbury line of 1890 fixed the starting-point of the line in the mouth of the Amacuro west of the Punta Barima on the Orinoco. And finally, in 1893, a second Rosebery line carried the boundary from a point to the west of the Amacuro as far as the source of the Cumano River and the Sierra of Usupamo. Nor have the various claims thus enumerated been claims on paper merely. An exercise of jurisdiction corresponding more or less to such claims has accompanied or followed closely upon each, and has been the more irritating and unjustifiable if, as is alleged, an agreement made in the year 1850 bound both parties to refrain from such occupation pending the settlement of the dispute.

While the British claim has been developing in the manner above described, Venezuela has made earnest and repeated efforts to have the question of boundary settled. Indeed, allowance being made for the distractions of a war of independence and for frequent internal revolutions, it may be fairly said that Venezuela has never ceased to strive for its adjustment. It could, of course, do so only through peaceful methods, any resort to force as against its powerful adversary being out of the question. Accordingly, shortly after the drawing of the Schomburgk line, an effort was made to settle the boundary by Treaty, and was apparently progressing towards a successful issue when the negotiations were brought to an end in 1844 by the death of the Venezuelan Plenipotentiary. In 1848 Venezuela entered upon a period of civil commotions which lasted for more than a quarter of a century, and the negotiations thus interrupted in 1844 were not resumed until 1876. In that year Venezuela offered to close the dispute by accepting the Moroco line proposed by Lord Aberdeen. But, without giving reasons for his refusal, Lord Granville rejected the proposal, and suggested a new line comprehending a large tract of territory all pretension to which seemed to have been abandoned by the previous action of Lord Aberdeen. Venezuela refused to assent to it, and negotiations dragged along without result until 1882, when Venezuela concluded that the only course open to her was arbitration of the controversy. Before she had made any definite proposition, however, Great Britain took the initiative by suggesting the making of a Treaty which should determine various other questions as well as that of the disputed boundary. The result was that a Treaty was practically agreed upon with the Gladstone Government in 1886 containing a general arbitration clause under which the parties might have submitted the boundary dispute to the decision of a third Power or of several Powers in amity with both. Before the actual signing of the Treaty, however, the Administration of Mr. Gladstone was superseded by that of Lord Salisbury, which declined to accede to the arbitration clause of the Treaty, notwithstanding the reasonable expectations of Venezuela to the contrary, based upon the Premier's emphatic declaration in the House of Lords that no serious Government would think of not respecting the engagements of its predecessor. Since then, Venezuela on the one side has been offering and calling for arbitration, while Great Britain on the other has responded by insisting upon the condition that any arbitration should relate only to such of the disputed territory as lies west of a line designated by herself. As this condition seemed inadmissible to Venezuela, and as, while the negotiations were pending, new appropriations of what is claimed to be Venezuelan territory continued to be made, Venezuela in 1887 suspended diplomatic relations with Great Britain, protesting, "before Her British Majesty's Government, before all civilized nations, and before the world in general, against the acts of spoliation committed to her detriment by the Government of Great Britain, which she at no time

and on no account will recognize as capable of altering in the least the rights which she has inherited from Spain, and respecting which she will ever be willing to submit to the decision of a third Power." Diplomatic relations have not since been restored, though what are claimed to be new and flagrant British aggressions forced Venezuela to resume negotiations on the boundary question—in 1890 through its Minister in Paris and a Special Envoy on that subject—and in 1893 through a confidential Agent, Señor Michelena. These negotiations, however, met with the fate of other like previous negotiations—Great Britain refusing to arbitrate except as to territory west of an arbritrary line drawn by herself. All attempts in that direction definitely terminated in October 1893, when Señor Michelena filed with the Foreign Office the following declaration:—

"I perform a most strict duty in raising again in the name of the Government of Venezuela a most solemn protest against the proceedings of the Colony of British Guiana, constituting encroachments upon the territory of the Republic, and against the declaration contained in your Excellency's communication that Her Britannic Majesty's Government considers that part of the territory as pertaining to British Guiana, and admits no claim to it on the part of Venezuela. In support of this protest, I reproduce all the arguments presented to your Excellency in my note of the 29th of last September and those which have been exhibited by the Government of Venezuela on the various occasions they have raised the same protest.

"I lay on Her Britannic Majesty's Government the entire responsibility of the incidents that may arise in the future from the necessity to which Venezuela has been driven to oppose by all possible means the dispossession of a part of her territory; for, by disregarding her just representations to put an end to this violent state of affairs through the decision of Arbiters, Her Majesty's Government ignores her rights, and imposes upon her the painful though peremptory duty of providing for her own legitimate defence."

To the territorial controversy between Great Britain and the Republic of Venezuela, thus briefly outlined, the United States has not been, and, indeed, in view of its traditional policy, could not be indifferent. The note to the British Foreign Office by which Venezuela opened negotiations in 1876 was at once communicated to this Government. In January 1881 a letter of the Venezuelan Minister at Washington respecting certain alleged demonstrations at the mouth of the Orinoco was thus answered by Mr. Evarts, then Secretary of State:—

"In reply, I have to inform you that, in view of the deep interest which the Government of the United States takes in all transactions tending to attempted encroachments of foreign Powers upon the territory of any of the Republics of this continent, this Government could not look with indifference to the forcible acquisition of such territory by England if the mission of the vessels now at the mouth of the Orinoco should be found to be for that end. This Government awaits, therefore, with natural concern the more particular statements promised by the Government of Venezuela, which it hopes will not be long delayed."

In the February following Mr. Evarts wrote again on the same subject as follows:—

"Referring to your note of the 21st December last, touching the operations of certain British war-vessels in and near the mouth of the Orinoco River, and to my reply thereto of the 31st ultimo, as well as to the recent occasions in which the subject has been mentioned in our conferences concerning the business of your mission, I take it to be fitting now, at the close of my incumbency of the office I hold, to advert to the interest with which the Government of the United States cannot fail to regard any such purpose with respect to the control of American territory as is stated to be contemplated by the Government of Great Britain; and to express my regret that the further information promised in your note with regard to such designs had not reached me in season to receive the attention which, notwithstanding the severe pressure of public business at the end of an administrative term, I should have taken pleasure in bestowing upon it. I doubt not, however, that your representations in fulfilment of the awaited additional orders of your Government will have like earnest and solicitous consideration at the hands of my successor."

In November 1882 the then state of negotiations with Great Britain, together with a copy of an intended note suggesting recourse to arbitration, was communicated to the Secretary of State by the President of Venezuela, with the expression of the hope that the United States would give him his opinion and advice, and such support as it deemed possible to offer Venezuela, in order that justice should be done her. Mr. Frelinghuysen replied, in a despatch to the United States' Minister at Carácas, as follows :—

"This Government has already expressed its view that arbitration of such disputes is a convenient resort in the case of failure to come to a mutual understanding, and intimated its willingness, if Venezuela should so desire, to propose to Great Britain such a mode of settlement. It is felt that the tender of good offices would not be so profitable if the United States were to approach Great Britain as the advocate of any prejudged solution in favour of Venezuela. So far as the United States can counsel and assist Venezuela, it believes it best to confine its reply to the renewal of the suggestion of arbitration and the offer of all its good offices in that direction. This suggestion is the more easily made, since it appears, from the instruction sent by Señor Seijas to the Venezuelan Minister in London on the same 15th July, 1882, that the President of Venezuela proposed to the British Government the submission of the dispute to arbitration by a third Power.

"You will take an early occasion to present the foregoing considerations to Señor Seijas, saying to him that, while trusting that the direct proposal for arbitration already made to Great Britain may bear good fruit (if, indeed, it has not already done so by its acceptance in principle), the Government of the United States will cheerfully lend any needful aid to press upon Great Britain in a friendly way the proposition so made; and at the same time you will say to Señor Seijas (in personal conference, and not with the formality of a written communication) that the United States, while advocating strongly the recourse of arbitration for the adjustment of international disputes affecting the States of America, does not seek to put itself forward as their Arbiter; that, viewing all such questions impartially, and with no intent or desire to prejudge their merits, the United States will not refuse its arbitration if asked by both parties; and that, regarding all such questions as essentially and distinctively American, the United States would always prefer to see such contentions adjusted through the arbitrament of an American rather than an European Power."

In 1884 General Guzman Blanco, the Venezuelan Minister to England, appointed with special reference to pending negotiations for a general Treaty with Great Britain, visited Washington on his way to London, and, after several conferences with the Secretary of State respecting the objects of his mission, was thus commended to the good offices of Mr. Lowell, our Minister at St. James' :—

"It will necessarily be somewhat within your discretion how far your good offices may be profitably employed with Her Majesty's Government to these ends, and at any rate you may take proper occasion to let Lord Granville know that we are not without concern as to whatever may affect the interests of a sister Republic of the American Continent and its position in the family of nations.

"If General Guzman should apply to you for advice or assistance in realizing the purposes of his mission you will show him proper consideration, and, without committing the United States to any determinate political solution, you will endeavour to carry out the views of this instruction."

The progress of General Guzman's negotiations did not fail to be observed by this Government, and in December 1886, with a view to preventing the rupture of diplomatic relations—which actually took place in February following—the then Secretary of State, Mr. Bayard, instructed our Minister to Great Britain to tender the arbitration of the United States in the following terms :—

"It does not appear that at any time heretofore the good offices of this Government have been actually tendered to avert a rupture between Great Britain and Venezuela. As intimated in my No. 58, our inaction in this regard would seem to be due to the reluctance of Venezuela to have the Government of the United States take any steps having relation to the action of the British Government which might, in appearance even, prejudice the resort to further arbitration or mediation which Venezuela desired. Nevertheless, the records abundantly testify our friendly

concern in the adjustment of the dispute; and the intelligence now received warrants me in tendering through you to Her Majesty's Government the good offices of the United States to promote an amicable settlement of the respective claims of Great Britain and Venezuela in the premises.

"As proof of the impartiality with which we view the question, we offer our arbitration, if acceptable, to both countries. We do this with the less hesitancy, as the dispute turns upon simple and readily ascertainable historical facts.

"Her Majesty's Government will readily understand that this attitude of friendly neutrality and entire impartiality touching the merits of the controversy, consisting wholly in a difference of facts between our friends and neighbours, is entirely consistent and compatible with the sense of responsibility that rests upon the United States in relation to the South American Republics. The doctrines we announced two generations ago, at the instance and with the moral support and approval of the British Government, have lost none of their force or importance in the progress of time, and the Governments of Great Britain and the United States are equally interested in conserving a status the wisdom of which has been demonstrated by the experience of more than half-a-century.

"It is proper, therefore, that you should convey to Lord Iddesleigh, in such sufficiently guarded terms as your discretion may dictate, the satisfaction that would be felt by the Government of the United States in perceiving that its wishes in this regard were permitted to have influence with Her Majesty's Government."

This offer of mediation was declined by Great Britain with the statement that a similar offer had already been received from another quarter, and that the Queen's Government were still not without hope of a settlement by direct diplomatic negotiations. In February 1888, having been informed that the Governor of British Guiana had by formal Decree laid claim to the territory traversed by the route of a proposed railway from Ciudad Bolivar to Guacipati, Mr. Bayard addressed a note to our Minister to England, from which the following extracts are taken:—

"The claim now stated to have been put forth by the authorities of British Guiana necessarily gives rise to grave disquietude, and creates an apprehension that the territorial claim does not follow historical traditions or evidence, but is apparently indefinite. At no time hitherto does it appear that the district of which Guacipati is the centre has been claimed as British territory, or that such jurisdiction has ever been asserted over its inhabitants, and if the reported Decree of the Governor of British Guiana be indeed genuine it is not apparent how any line of railway from Ciudad Bolivar to Guacipati could enter or traverse territory within the control of Great Britain.

"It is true that the line claimed by Great Britain as the western boundary of British Guiana is uncertain and vague. It is only necessary to examine the British Colonial Office List for a few years back to perceive this. In the issue for 1877, for instance, the line runs nearly southwardly from the mouth of the Amacuro to the junction of the Cotinga and Takutu Rivers. In the issue of 1887, ten years later, it makes a wide détour to the westward, following the Yuruari. Guacipati lies considerably to the westward of the line officially claimed in 1887, and it may perhaps be instructive to compare with it the map which doubtless will be found in the Colonial Office List for the present year.

"It may be well for you to express anew to Lord Salisbury the great gratification it would afford this Government to see the Venezuelan dispute amicably and honourably settled by arbitration or otherwise, and our readiness to do anything we properly can to assist to that end.

"In the course of your conversation you may refer to the publication in the London "Financier" of the 24th January (a copy of which you can procure and exhibit to Lord Salisbury), and express apprehension lest the widening pretensions of British Guiana to possess territory over which Venezuela's jurisdiction has never heretofore been disputed may not diminish the chances for a practical settlement.

"If, indeed, it should appear that there is no fixed limit to the British boundary claim, our good disposition to aid in a settlement might not only be defeated, but be obliged to give place to a feeling of grave concern."

In 1889, information having been received that Barima, at the mouth of the Orinoco, had been declared a British port, Mr. Blaine, then Secretary of State, authorized Mr. White to confer with Lord Salisbury for the re-establishment of

diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela on the basis of a temporary restoration of the *status quo*, and on May 1 and May 6, 1890, sent the following telegrams to our Minister to England (Mr. Lincoln):—

"*May* 1, 1890.

"Mr. Lincoln is instructed to use his good offices with Lord Salisbury to bring about the resumption of diplomatic intercourse between Great Britain and Venezuela as a preliminary step towards the settlement of the boundary dispute by arbitration. The joint proposals of Great Britain and the United States towards Portugal, which have just been brought about, would seem to make the present time propitious for submitting this question to an international arbitration. He is requested to propose to Lord Salisbury, with a view to an accommodation, that an informal conference be had in Washington, or in London, of Representatives of the three Powers. In such conference the position of the United States is one solely of impartial friendship towards both litigants."

"*May* 5, 1890.

"It is nevertheless desired that you shall do all you can consistently with our attitude of impartial friendship to induce some accord between the contestants by which the merits of the controversy may be fairly ascertained, and the rights of each party justly confirmed. The neutral position of this Government does not comport with any expression of opinion on the part of this Department as to what these rights are, but it is confident that the shifting footing on which the British boundary question has rested for several years past is an obstacle to such a correct appreciation of the nature and grounds of her claim as would alone warrant the formation of any opinion."

In the course of the same year, 1890, Venezuela sent to London a Special Envoy to bring about the resumption of diplomatic relations with Great Britain through the good offices of the United States' Minister. But the mission failed, because a condition of such resumption, steadily adhered to by Venezuela, was the reference of the boundary dispute to arbitration. Since the close of the negotiations initiated by Señor Michelena in 1893, Venezuela has repeatedly brought the controversy to the notice of the United States, has insisted upon its importance to the United States as well as to Venezuela, has represented it to have reached an acute stage—making definite action by the United States imperative—and has not ceased to solicit the services and support of the United States in aid of its final adjustment. These appeals have not been received with indifference, and our Ambassador to Great Britain has been uniformly instructed to exert all his influence in the direction of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela, and in favour of arbitration of the boundary controversy. The Secretary of State, in a communication to Mr. Bayard, bearing date the 13th July, 1894, used the following language:—

"The President is inspired by a desire for a peaceable and honourable settlement of the existing difficulties between an American State and a powerful Transatlantic nation, and would be glad to see the re-establishment of such diplomatic relations between them as would promote that end.

"I can discern but two equitable solutions of the present controversy. One is the arbitral determination of the rights of the disputants as the respective successors to the historical rights of Holland and Spain over the region in question. The other is to create a new boundary-line in accordance with the dictates of mutual expediency and consideration. The two Governments having so far been unable to agree on a conventional line, the consistent and conspicuous advocacy by the United States and England of the principle of arbitration, and their recourse thereto in settlement of important questions arising between them, makes such a mode of adjustment especially appropriate in the present instance, and this Government will gladly do what it can to further a determination in that sense."

Subsequent communications to Mr. Bayard direct him to ascertain whether a Minister from Venezuela would be received by Great Britain. In the Annual Message to Congress of the 3rd December last, the President used the following language: "The boundary of British Guiana still remains in dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela. Believing that its early settlement, on some just basis alike honourable to both parties, is in the line of our established policy to remove from this hemisphere all causes of difference with Powers beyond the sea, I shall renew the efforts heretofore

made to bring about a restoration of diplomatic relations between the disputants, and to induce a reference to arbitration, a resort which Great Britain so conspicuously favours in principle and respects in practice, and which is earnestly sought by her weaker adversary." And, on the 22nd February, 1895, a Joint Resolution of Congress declared, "That the President's suggestion . . . . that Great Britain and Venezuela refer their dispute as to boundaries to friendly arbitration be earnestly recommended to the favourable consideration of both parties in interest."

The important features of the existing situation, as shown by the foregoing recital, may be briefly stated:—

1. The title to territory of indefinite but confessedly very large extent is in dispute between Great Britain on the one hand, and the South American Republic of Venezuela on the other.

2. The disparity in the strength of the claimants is such that Venezuela can hope to establish her claim only through peaceful methods—through an agreement with her adversary either upon the subject itself or upon an arbitration.

3. The controversy with varying claims on the part of Great Britain has existed for more than half-a-century, during which period many earnest and persistent efforts of Venezuela to establish a boundary by agreement have proved unsuccessful.

4. The futility of the endeavour to obtain a conventional line being recognized, Venezuela, for a quarter of a century, has asked and striven for arbitration.

5. Great Britain, however, has always and continuously refused, and still refuses, to arbitrate except upon the condition of a renunciation of a large part of the Venezuelan claim, and of a concession to herself of a large share of the territory in controversy.

6. By the frequent interposition of its good offices at the instance of Venezuela, by constantly urging and promoting the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries, by pressing for arbitration of the disputed boundary, by offering to act as Arbitrator, by expressing its grave concern whenever new alleged instances of British aggression upon Venezuelan territory have been brought to its notice, the Government of the United States has made it clear to Great Britain and to the world that the controversy is one in which both its honour and its interests are involved, and the continuance of which it cannot regard with indifference.

The accuracy of the foregoing analysis of the existing status cannot, it is believed, be challenged. It shows that status to be such that those charged with the interests of the United States are now forced to determine exactly what those interests are and what course of action they require. It compels them to decide to what extent, if any, the United States may and should intervene in a controversy between and primarily concerning only Great Britain and Venezuela, and to decide how far it is bound to see that the integrity of Venezuelan territory is not impaired by the pretensions of its powerful antagonist. Are any such right and duty devolved upon the United States? If not, the United States has already done all, if not more than all, that a purely sentimental interest in the affairs of the two countries justifies, and to push its interposition farther would be unbecoming and undignified, and might well subject it to the charge of impertinent intermeddling with affairs with which it has no rightful concern. On the other hand, if any such right and duty exist, their due exercise and discharge will not permit of any action that shall not be efficient, and that, if the power of the United States is adequate, shall not result in the accomplishment of the end in view. The question thus presented, as matter of principle and regard being had to the settled national policy, does not seem difficult of solution. Yet the momentous practical consequences dependent upon its determination require that it should be carefully considered, and that the grounds of the conclusion arrived at should be fully and frankly stated.

That there are circumstances under which a nation may justly interpose in a controversy to which two or more other nations are the direct and immediate parties is an admitted canon of international law. The doctrine is ordinarily expressed in terms of the most general character, and is perhaps incapable of more specific statement. It is declared in substance that a nation may avail itself of this right whenever what is done or proposed by any of the parties primarily concerned is a serious and direct menace to its own integrity, tranquillity, or welfare. The propriety of the rule when applied in good faith will not be questioned in any quarter. On the other hand, it is an inevitable though unfortunate consequence of the wide scope of the rule that it has only too often been made a cloak for schemes of wanton

spoliation and aggrandizement. We are concerned at this time, however, not so much with the general rule as with a form of it which is peculiarly and distinctively American. Washington, in the solemn admonitions of the Farewell Address, explicitly warned his countrymen against entanglements with the politics or the controversies of European Powers. "Europe," he said, "has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence, she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities. Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course."

During the administration of President Monroe this doctrine of the Farewell Address was first considered in all its aspects and with a view to all its practical consequences. The Farewell Address, while it took America out of the field of European politics, was silent as to the part Europe might be permitted to play in America. Doubtless, it was thought the latest addition to the family of nations should not make haste to prescribe rules for the guidance of its older members, and the expediency and propriety of serving the Powers of Europe with notice of a complete and distinctive American policy, excluding them from interference with American political affairs, might well seem dubious to a generation to whom the French alliance, with its manifold advantages to the cause of American independence, was fresh in mind. Twenty years later, however, the situation had changed. The lately-born nation had greatly increased in power and resources, had demonstrated its strength on land and sea, and as well in the conflicts of arms as in the pursuits of peace; and had begun to realize the commanding position on this continent which the character of its people, their free institutions, and their remoteness from the chief scene of European contentions combined to give it. The Monroe Administration, therefore, did not hesitate to accept and apply the logic of the Farewell Address by declaring in effect that American non-intervention in European affairs necessarily implied and meant European non-intervention in American affairs. Conceiving unquestionably that complete European non-interference in American concerns would be cheaply purchased by complete American non-interference in European concerns, President Monroe, in the celebrated Message of the 2nd December, 1823, used the following language:—

"In the wars of the European Powers, in matters relating to themselves, we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparations for our defence. With the movements in this hemisphere we are, of necessity, more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied Powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments. And to the defence of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candour and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing Colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European Power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States. . . . . Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its Powers, to consider the Government *de facto* as the legitimate Government for us, to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting, in all instances, the just claims of every Power, submitting to injuries from none. But in regard to these continents circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied Powers should extend their

political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can any one believe that our Southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference."

The Monroe Administration, however, did not content itself with formulating a correct rule for the regulation of the relations between Europe and America. It aimed at also securing the practical benefits to result from the application of the rule. Hence, the Message just quoted declared that the American continents were fully occupied, and were not the subjects for future colonization by European Powers. To this spirit and this purpose, also, are to be attributed the passages of the same Message which treat any infringement of the rule against interference in American affairs on the part of the Powers of Europe as an act of unfriendliness to the United States. It was realized that it was futile to lay down such a rule unless its observance could be enforced. It was manifest that the United States was the only Power in this hemisphere capable of enforcing it. It was therefore courageously declared, not merely that Europe ought not to interfere in American affairs, but that any European Power doing so would be regarded as antagonizing the interests and inviting the opposition of the United States.

That America is in no part open to colonization, though the proposition was not universally admitted at the time of its first enunciation, has long been universally conceded. We are now concerned, therefore, only with that other practical application of the Monroe doctrine the disregard of which by an European Power is to be deemed an act of unfriendliness towards the United States. The precise scope and limitations of this rule cannot be too clearly apprehended. It does not establish any general Protectorate by the United States over other American States. It does not relieve any American State from its obligations as fixed by international law, nor prevent any European Power directly interested from enforcing such obligations or from inflicting merited punishment for the breach of them. It does not contemplate any interference in the internal affairs of any American State, or in the relations between it and other American States. It does not justify any attempt on our part to change the established form of Government of any American State, or to prevent the people of such State from altering that form according to their own will and pleasure. The rule in question has but a single purpose and object. It is that no European Power or combination of European Powers shall forcibly deprive an American State of the right and power of self-government, and of shaping for itself its own political fortunes and destinies.

That the rule thus defined has been the accepted public law of this country ever since its promulgation cannot fairly be denied. Its pronouncement by the Monroe Administration at that particular time was unquestionably due to the inspiration of Great Britain, who at once gave it an open and unqualified adhesion which has never been withdrawn. But the rule was decided upon and formulated by the Monroe Administration as a distinctively American doctrine, of great import to the safety and welfare of the United States, after the most careful consideration by a Cabinet which numbered among its members John Quincy Adams, Calhoun, Crawford, and Wirt, and which before acting took both Jefferson and Madison into its counsels. Its promulgation was received with acclaim by the entire people of the country, irrespective of party. Three years after, Webster declared that the doctrine involved the honour of the country. "I look upon it," he said, "as part of its treasures of reputation, and for one I intend to guard it;" and he added, "I look on the Message of December 1823 as forming a bright page in our history. I will help neither to erase it nor to tear it out; nor shall it be by any act of mine blurred or blotted. It did honour to the sagacity of the Government, and I will not diminish that honour."

Though the rule thus highly eulogized by Webster has never been formally affirmed by Congress, the House in 1864 declared against the Mexican Monarchy sought to be set up by the French as not in accord with the policy of the United States; and in 1889 the Senate expressed its disapproval of the connection of any European Power with a canal across the Isthmus of Darien or Central America.

It is manifest that, if a rule has been openly and uniformly declared and acted upon by the Executive Branch of the Government for more than seventy years without express repudiation by Congress, it must be conclusively presumed to have its sanction. Yet it is certainly no more than the exact truth to say that every Administration since President Monroe's has had occasion, and sometimes more occasions than one, to examine and consider the Monroe doctrine, and has in each instance given it emphatic indorsement. Presidents have dwelt upon it in Messages to Congress, and Secretaries

of State have time after time made it the theme of diplomatic representation. Nor, if the practical results of the rule be sought for, is the record either meagre or obscure. Its first and immediate effect was indeed most momentous and far-reaching. It was the controlling factor in the emancipation of South America, and to it the independent States which now divide that region between them are largely indebted for their very existence. Since then the most striking single achievement to be credited to the rule is the evacuation of Mexico by the French upon the termination of the Civil War. But we are also indebted to it for the provisions of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, which both neutralized any interoceanic canal across Central America, and expressly excluded Great Britain from occupying or exercising any dominion over any part of Central America. It has been used in the case of Cuba, as if justifying the position that while the sovereignty of Spain will be respected, the island will not be permitted to become the possession of any other European Power. It has been influential in bringing about the definite relinquishment of any supposed Protectorate by Great Britain over the Mosquito Coast.

President Polk, in the case of Yucatan and the proposed voluntary transfer of that country to Great Britain or Spain, relied upon the Monroe doctrine, though perhaps erroneously, when he declared in a special Message to Congress on the subject that the United States could not consent to any such transfer. Yet, in somewhat the same spirit, Secretary Fish affirmed in 1870 that President Grant had but followed "the teachings of all our history" in declaring in his Annual Message of that year that existing dependencies were no longer regarded as subject to transfer from one European Power to another, and that when the present relation of Colonies ceases they are to become independent Powers. Another development of the rule, though apparently not necessarily required by either its letter or its spirit, is found in the objection to arbitration of South American controversies by an European Power. American questions, it is said, are for American decision, and on that ground the United States went so far as to refuse to mediate in the war between Chile and Peru jointly with Great Britain and France.

Finally, on the ground, among others, that the authority of the Monroe doctrine, and the prestige of the United States as its exponent and sponsor, would be seriously impaired, Secretary Bayard strenuously resisted the enforcement of the Pelletier claim against Haïti. "The United States," he said, "has proclaimed herself the protector of this Western World, in which she is by far the stronger Power, from the intrusion of European Sovereignties. She can point with proud satisfaction to the fact that over and over again has she declared effectively that serious indeed would be the consequences if European hostile foot should, without just cause, tread those States in the New World which have emancipated themselves from European control. She has announced that she would cherish, as it becomes her, the territorial rights of the feeblest of those States, regarding them not merely as in the eye of the law equal to even the greatest of nationalities, but in view of her distinctive policy as entitled to be regarded by her as the objects of a peculiarly gracious care. I feel bound to say that if we should sanction by reprisals in Haïti the ruthless invasion of her territory and insult to her sovereignty which the facts now before us disclose, if we approve by solemn Executive action and Congressional assent that invasion, it will be difficult for us hereafter to assert that in the New World, of whose rights we are the peculiar guardians, these rights have never been invaded by ourselves."

The foregoing enumeration not only shows the many instances wherein the rule in question has been affirmed and applied, but also demonstrates that the Venezuelan boundary controversy is in any view far within the scope and spirit of the rule as uniformly accepted and acted upon. A doctrine of American public law thus long and firmly established and supported could not easily be ignored in a proper case for its application, even were the considerations upon which it is founded obscure or questionable. No such objection can be made, however, to the Monroe doctrine understood and defined in the manner already stated. It rests, on the contrary, upon facts and principles that are both intelligible and incontrovertible. That distance and 3,000 miles of intervening ocean make any permanent political union between an European and an American State unnatural and inexpedient will hardly be denied. But physical and geographical considerations are the least of the objections to such a union. Europe, as Washington observed, has a set of primary interests which are peculiar to herself. America is not interested in them, and ought not to be vexed or complicated with them. Each great European Power, for instance, to-day maintains enormous armies and fleets in self-defence, and for protection against any other European Power or Powers. What have the States of America to do with that

condition of things, or why should they be impoverished by wars or preparations for wars with whose causes or results they can have no direct concern? If all Europe were to suddenly fly to arms over the fate of Turkey, would it not be preposterous that any American State should find itself inextricably involved in the miseries and burdens of the contest? If it were it would prove to be a partnership in the cost and losses of the struggle, but not in any ensuing benefits.

What is true of the material is no less true of what may be termed the moral interests involved. Those pertaining to Europe are peculiar to her, and are entirely diverse from those pertaining and peculiar to America. Europe as a whole is Monarchical, and, with the single important exception of the Republic of France, is committed to the Monarchical principle. America, on the other hand, is devoted to the exactly opposite principle—to the idea that every people has an inalienable right of self-government—and, in the United States of America, has furnished to the world the most conspicuous and conclusive example and proof of the excellence of free institutions, whether from the stand-point of national greatness or of individual happiness. It cannot be necessary, however, to enlarge upon this phase of the subject—whether moral or material interests be considered, it cannot but be universally conceded that those of Europe are irreconcilably diverse from those of America, and that any European control of the latter is necessarily both incongruous and injurious. If, however, for the reasons stated, the forcible intrusion of European Powers into American politics is to be deprecated—if, as it is to be deprecated, it should be resisted and prevented—such resistance and prevention must come from the United States. They would come from it, of course, were it made the point of attack. But, if they come at all, they must also come from it when any other American State is attacked, since only the United States has the strength adequate to the exigency. Is it true, then, that the safety and welfare of the United States are so concerned with the maintenance of the independence of every American State as against any European Power as to justify and require the interposition of the United States whenever that independence is endangered? The question can be candidly answered in but one way. The States of America, South as well as North, by geographical proximity, by natural sympathy, by similarity of Governmental Constitutions, are friends and allies, commercially and politically, of the United States. To allow the subjugation of any of them by an European Power is, of course, to completely reverse that situation, and signifies the loss of all the advantages incident to their natural relations to us. But that is not all. The people of the United States have a vital interest in the cause of popular self-government. They have secured the right for themselves and their posterity at the cost of infinite blood and treasure. They have realized and exemplified its beneficent operation by a career unexampled in point of national greatness or individual felicity. They believe it to be for the healing of all nations, and that civilization must either advance or retrograde accordingly as its supremacy is extended or curtailed. Imbued with these sentiments, the people of the United States might not impossibly be wrought up to an active propaganda in favour of a cause so highly valued for themselves and for mankind. But the age of the Crusades has passed, and they are content with such assertion and defence of the right of popular self-government as their own security and welfare demand. It is in that view more than in any other that they believe it not to be tolerated that the political control of an American State shall be forcibly assumed by an European Power. The mischiefs apprehended from such a source are none the less real because possibly not immediately imminent in any specific case, and are none the less to be guarded against because the combination of circumstances that will bring them upon us cannot be predicted.

The civilized States of Christendom deal with each other on substantially the same principles that regulate the conduct of individuals. The greater its enlightenment the more surely every State perceives that its permanent interests require it to be governed by the immutable principles of right and justice. Each, nevertheless, is only too liable to succumb to the temptations offered by seeming special opportunities for its own aggrandizement, and each would rashly imperil its own safety were it not to remember that for the regard and respect of other States it must be largely dependent upon its own strength and power. To-day the United States is practically Sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition. Why? It is not because of the pure friendship or good-will felt for it. It is not simply by reason of its high character as a civilized State, nor because wisdom and justice and equity are the invariable characteristics of the dealings of the United States. It is because, in addition to all other grounds, its infinite resources,

combined with its isolated position, render it master of the situation, and practically invulnerable as against any or all other Powers. All the advantages of this superiority are at once imperilled if the principle be admitted that European Powers may convert American States into Colonies or provinces of their own. The principle would be eagerly availed of, and every Power doing so would immediately acquire a base of military operations against us. What one Power was permitted to do could not be denied to another, and it is not inconceivable that the struggle now going on for the acquisition of Africa might be transferred to South America. If it were, the weaker countries would unquestionably be soon absorbed, while the ultimate result might be the partition of all South America between the various European Powers. The disastrous consequences to the United States of such a condition of things are obvious. The loss of prestige, of authority, and of weight in the councils of the family of nations would be among the least of them. Our only real rivals in peace, as well as enemies in war, would be found located at our very doors. Thus far in our history we have been spared the burdens and evils of immense standing armies, and all the other accessories of huge warlike establishments, and the exemption has largely contributed to our national greatness and wealth, as well as to the happiness of every citizen. But, with the Powers of Europe permanently encamped on American soil, the ideal conditions we have thus far enjoyed cannot be expected to continue. We too must be armed to the teeth, we too must convert the flower of our male population into soldiers and sailors, and, by withdrawing them from the various pursuits of peaceful industry, we too must practically annihilate a large share of the productive energy of the nation. How a greater calamity than this could overtake us it is difficult to see. Nor are our just apprehensions to be allayed by suggestions of the friendliness of European Powers, of their good-will towards us, of their disposition, should they be our neighbours, to dwell with us in peace and harmony.

The people of the United States have learned in the school of experience to what extent the relations of States to each other depend not upon sentiment nor principle, but upon selfish interest. They will not soon forget that, in their hour of distress, all their anxieties and burdens were aggravated by the possibility of demonstrations against their national life on the part of Powers with whom they had long maintained the most harmonious relations. They have yet in mind that France seized upon the apparent opportunity of our Civil War to set up a Monarchy in the adjoining State of Mexico. They realize that, had France and Great Britain held important South American possessions to work from and to benefit, the temptation to destroy the predominance of the Great Republic in this hemisphere by furthering its dismemberment might have been irresistible. From that grave peril they have been saved in the past, and may be saved again in the future, through the operation of the sure but silent force of the doctrine proclaimed by President Monroe. To abandon it, on the other hand, disregarding both the logic of the situation and the facts of our past experience, would be to renounce a policy which has proved both an easy defence against foreign aggression and a prolific source of internal progress and prosperity.

There is, then, a doctrine of American public law, well founded in principle and abundantly sanctioned by precedent, which entitles and requires the United States to treat as an injury to itself the forcible assumption by an European Power of political control over an American State. The application of the doctrine to the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela remains to be made, and presents no real difficulty. Though the dispute relates to a boundary-line, yet, as it is between States, it necessarily imports political control to be lost by one party and gained by the other. The political control at stake, too, is of no mean importance, but concerns a domain of great extent—the British claim, it will be remembered, apparently expanding in two years some 33,000 square miles—and, if it also directly involves the command of the mouth of the Orinoco, is of immense consequence in connection with the whole river navigation of the interior of South America. It has been intimated, indeed, that in respect of these South American possessions, Great Britain is herself an American State like any other, so that a controversy between her and Venezuela is to be settled between themselves as if it were between Venezuela and Brazil, or between Venezuela and Colombia, and does not call for or justify United States' intervention. If this view be tenable at all, the logical sequence is plain. Great Britain as a South American State is to be entirely differentiated from Great Britain generally; and if the boundary question cannot be settled otherwise than by force, British Guiana with her own independent resources, and not those of the British Empire, should be left to settle the matter with Venezuela—an arrangement which very possibly Venezuela might not object to.

But the proposition that an European Power with an American dependency is for the purposes of the Monroe doctrine to be classed not as an European but as an American State will not admit of serious discussion. If it were to be adopted, the Monroe doctrine would be too valueless to be worth asserting. Not only would every European Power now having a South American Colony be enabled to extend its possessions on this continent indefinitely, but any other European Power might also do the same by first taking pains to procure a fraction of South American soil by voluntary cession. The declaration of the Monroe Message—that existing Colonies or dependencies of an European Power would not be interfered with by the United States—means Colonies or dependencies then existing with their limits as then existing. So it has been invariably construed, and so it must continue to be construed, unless it is to be deprived of all vital force. Great Britain cannot be deemed a South American State within the purview of the Monroe doctrine, nor, if she is appropriating Venezuelan territory, is it material that she does so by advancing the frontier of an old Colony instead of by the planting of a new Colony. The difference is matter of form, and not of substance, and the doctrine if pertinent in the one case must be in the other also. It is not admitted, however, and therefore cannot be assumed, that Great Britain is in fact usurping dominion over Venezuelan territory. While Venezuela charges such usurpation Great Britain denies it, and the United States, until the merits are authoritatively ascertained, can take sides with neither. But while this is so—while the United States may not, under existing circumstances at least, take upon itself to say which of the two parties is right and which wrong—it is certainly within its right to demand that the truth shall be ascertained. Being entitled to resent and resist any sequestration of Venezuelan soil by Great Britain, it is necessarily entitled to know whether such sequestration has occurred or is now going on. Otherwise, if the United States is without the right to know and have it determined whether there is not British aggression upon Venezuelan territory, its right to protest against or repel such aggression may be dismissed from consideration. The right to act upon a fact the existence of which there is no right to have ascertained is simply illusory. It being clear, therefore, that the United States may legitimately insist upon the merits of the boundary question being determined, it is equally clear that there is but one feasible mode of determining them, viz., peaceful arbitration. The impracticability of any conventional adjustment has been often and thoroughly demonstrated.

Even more impossible of consideration is an appeal to arms—a mode of settling national pretensions unhappily not yet wholly obsolete. If, however, it were not condemnable as a relic of barbarism and a crime in itself, so one-sided a contest could not be invited nor even accepted by Great Britain without distinct disparagement to her character as a civilized State.

Great Britain, however, assumes no such attitude. On the contrary, she both admits that there is a controversy, and that arbitration should be resorted to for its adjustment. But, while up to that point her attitude leaves nothing to be desired, its practical effect is completely nullified by her insistence that the submission shall cover but a part of the controversy—that, as a condition of arbitrating her right to a part of the disputed territory, the remainder shall be turned over to her. If it were possible to point to a boundary which both parties had ever agreed or assumed to be such either expressly or tacitly, the demand that territory conceded by such line to British Guiana should be held not to be in dispute might rest upon a reasonable basis. But there is no such line. The territory which Great Britain insists shall be ceded to her as a condition of arbitrating her claim to other territory has never been admitted to belong to her. It has always and consistently been claimed by Venezuela. Upon what principle—except her feebleness as a nation—is she to be denied the right of having the claim heard and passed upon by an impartial Tribunal? No reason or shadow of reason appears in all the voluminous literature of the subject. "It is to be so because I will it to be so" seems to be the only justification Great Britain offers. It is, indeed, intimated that the British claim to this particular territory rests upon an occupation, which, whether acquiesced in or not, has ripened into a perfect title by long continuance. But what prescription affecting territorial rights can be said to exist as between Sovereign States? Or, if there is any, what is the legitimate consequence? It is not that all arbitration should be denied, but only that the submission should embrace an additional topic, namely, the validity of the asserted prescriptive title either in point of law or in point of fact. No different result follows from the contention that as a matter of principle Great Britain cannot be asked to submit, and ought not to submit, to arbitration her political

and sovereign rights over territory. This contention, if applied to the whole or to a vital part of the possessions of a Sovereign State, need not be controverted. To hold otherwise might be equivalent to holding that a Sovereign State was bound to arbitrate its very existence. But Great Britain has herself shown in various instances that the principle has no pertinency when either the interests or the territorial area involved are not of controlling magnitude, and her loss of them as the result of an arbitration cannot appreciably affect her honour or her power. Thus, she has arbitrated the extent of her colonial possessions twice with the United States, twice with Portugal, and once with Germany, and perhaps in other instances. The North-West Water Boundary Arbitration of 1872 between her and this country is an example in point, and well illustrates both the effect to be given to long-continued use and enjoyment, and the fact that a truly great Power sacrifices neither prestige nor dignity by reconsidering the most emphatic rejection of a proposition when satisfied of the obvious and intrinsic justice of the case.

By the Award of the Emperor of Germany, the Arbitrator in that case, the United States acquired San Juan and a number of smaller islands near the coast of Vancouver as a consequence of the decision that the term "the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island," as used in the Treaty of Washington of 1846, meant the Haro Channel, and not the Rosario Channel. Yet a leading contention of Great Britain before the Arbitrator was that equity required a Judgment in her favour, because a decision in favour of the United States would deprive British subjects of rights of navigation of which they had had the habitual enjoyment from the time when the Rosario Strait was first explored and surveyed in 1798. So though, by virtue of the Award, the United States acquired San Juan and the other islands of the group to which it belongs, the British Foreign Secretary had in 1859 instructed the British Minister at Washington as follows:—

"Her Majesty's Government must, therefore, under any circumstances, maintain the right of the British Crown to the Island of San Juan. The interests at stake in connection with the retention of that island are too important to admit of compromise, and your Lordship will consequently bear in mind that, whatever arrangement as to the boundary-line is finally arrived at, no settlement of the question will be accepted by Her Majesty's Government which does not provide for the Island of San Juan being reserved to the British Crown."

Thus, as already intimated, the British demand that her right to a portion of the disputed territory shall be acknowledged before she will consent to an arbitration as to the rest seems to stand upon nothing but her own *ipse dixit*. She says to Venezuela, in substance:—

"You can get none of the debatable land by force, because you are not strong enough; you can get none by Treaty, because I will not agree; and you can take your chance of getting a portion by arbitration only if you first agree to abandon to me such other portion as I may designate."

It is not perceived how such an attitude can be defended, nor how it is reconcilable with that love of justice and fair play so eminently characteristic of the English race. It, in effect, deprives Venezuela of her free agency, and puts her under virtual duress. Territory acquired by reason of it will be as much wrested from her by the strong hand as if occupied by British troops or covered by British fleets. It seems, therefore, quite impossible that this position of Great Britain should be assented to by the United States, or that, if such position be adhered to with the result of enlarging the bounds of British Guiana, it should not be regarded as amounting in substance to an invasion and conquest of Venezuelan territory.

In these circumstances, the duty of the President appears to him unmistakable and imperative. Great Britain's assertion of title to the disputed territory, combined with her refusal to have that title investigated, being a substantial appropriation of the territory to her own use, not to protest and give warning that the transaction will be regarded as injurious to the interests of the people of the United States, as well as oppressive in itself, would be to ignore an established policy with which the honour and welfare of this country are closely identified. While the measures necessary or proper for the vindication of that policy are to be determined by another branch of the Government, it is clearly for the Executive to leave nothing undone which may tend to render such determination unnecessary.

You are instructed, therefore, to present the foregoing views to Lord Salisbury by reading to him this communication (leaving with him a copy should he so desire), and to reinforce them by such pertinent considerations as will doubtless occur to you. They call for a definite decision upon the point whether Great Britain will consent or will decline to submit the Venezuelan boundary question in its entirety to impartial arbitration. It is the earnest hope of the President that the conclusion will be on the side of arbitration, and that Great Britain will add one more to the conspicuous precedents she has already furnished in favour of that wise and just mode of adjusting international disputes. If he is to be disappointed in that hope, however—a result not to be anticipated, and in his judgment calculated to greatly embarrass the future relations between this country and Great Britain—it is his wish to be made acquainted with the fact at such early date as will enable him to lay the whole subject before Congress in his next Annual Message.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD OLNEY.

No. 12.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, August* 7, 1895.

THE American Ambassador brought to me to-day, and read to me in part, the despatch of which I inclose a copy.* It was evidently much too large and much too complicated an argument to deal with in the course of conversation. I only observed to his Excellency that the invocation of doctrines so far-reaching in their scope, and containing so much disputable matter, was not calculated to bring to a very early conclusion the controversy respecting the boundary of British Guiana to which they were applied. That controversy, so long as we were dealing with the actual questions in issue, was not of a very extensive character, but it would be necessary to investigate and consider all the positions which were laid down in the course of Mr. Olney's elaborate and exhaustive statement, lest we should on some future occasion find ourselves committed to the acceptance of some principle of international law to which in reality we were not prepared to assent.

I promised to bring it at once before the jurists, who would, in the first instance, have to express their opinion upon the history and the facts which it adduced.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 13.

Mr. Bayard to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received August 9.)

Embassy of the United States, London,
My Lord, *August* 8, 1895.

WITH reference to the subject of the interview which you did me the honour to accord to me yesterday, and as connected with the instruction of the Secretary of State of the United States which I had then the honour to communicate to your Lordship, and to place a copy thereof in your hands, I beg leave now to communicate the purport of a supplementary instruction, dated the 24th July, since received by me, in reference to the Anglo-Venezuelan boundary dispute, and the alleged enlargement of the territorial area claimed for British Guiana of 33,000 square miles between 1884 and 1886.

This statement is made on the authority of the British publication entitled "The Statesman's Year Book," edited by Mr. J. Scott Keltie, Assistant Secretary to the Royal Geographical Society, and is corroborated by the British "Colonial Office List."

Under the head of British Guiana in the issue of 1885, and at p. 24, it is therein

* No. 11.

stated: "It is impossible to specify the exact area of the Colony, as its precise boundaries between Venezuela and Brazil respectively are undetermined, but it has been computed to be 76,000 square miles." In the same publication for 1886 the same statement occurs, with the change in the area to "about 109,000 square miles."

The maps in the volumes mentioned are identical, so that the increase of 33,000 square miles thereby claimed for British Guiana is not thereby explained; but later "Colonial Office List" maps show a varying sweep of the boundary westward into what previously figured as Venezuelan territory, while no change is noted in the Brazilian frontier.

I am duly mindful of your Lordship's emphatic disavowal to me yesterday of any official authority for the statements contained in the "Colonial Office List," but communicate the fact of their publication, in serial continuity, here in London, and the absence of any known correction. It may also be noted that, on the title-page, the work is alleged to be compiled from official records, by permission of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, by Mr. John Anderson, an official of the Colonial Office.

I have also the honour to transmit herewith a volume, published by the United States' Government, of Papers relating to their Foreign Relations for 1894, in which (at p. 812, &c.) is contained a Memorandum on the Guiana and Venezuela boundary question, communicated to the late Mr. Gresham, Secretary of State, by Señor Andrade, the Venezuelan Envoy to the United States—a compendium which may be of convenience to you, and which is sent in accordance with your Lordship's intimation of a desire to receive the same.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. F. BAYARD.

No. 14.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Bayard.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, August* 17, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 8th instant, relating to the Venezuelan boundary question, in which you inclose Papers concerning the Foreign Relations of the United States in 1894.

I beg to thank your Excellency for that communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 15.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir J. Pauncefote.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 26, 1895.

ON the 7th August I transmitted to Lord Gough a copy of the despatch from Mr. Olney which Mr. Bayard had left with me that day, and of which he had read portions to me. I informed him at the time that it could not be answered until it had been carefully considered by the Law Officers of the Crown. I have therefore deferred replying to it till after the recess.

I will not now deal with those portions of it which are concerned exclusively with the controversy that has for some time past existed between the Republic of Venezuela and Her Majesty's Government in regard to the boundary which separates their dominions. I take a very different view from Mr. Olney of various matters upon which he touches in that part of the despatch; but I will defer for the present all observations upon it, as it concerns matters which are not in themselves of first-rate importance, and do not directly concern the relations between Great Britain and the United States.

The latter part however of the despatch, turning from the question of the frontiers of Venezuela, proceeds to deal with principles of a far wider character, and to advance doctrines of international law which are of considerable interest to all the nations whose dominions include any portion of the western hemisphere.

The contentions set forth by Mr. Olney in this part of his despatch are represented by him as being an application of the political maxims which are well known in American discussion under the name of the Monroe doctrine. As far as I am aware, this doctrine has never been before advanced on behalf of the United States in any written communication addressed to the Government of another nation; but it has been generally adopted and assumed as true by many eminent writers and politicians in the United States. It is said to have largely influenced the Government of that country in the conduct of its foreign affairs: though Mr. Clayton, who was Secretary of State under President Taylor, expressly stated that that Administration had in no way adopted it. But during the period that has elapsed since the Message of President Monroe was delivered in 1823, the doctrine has undergone a very notable development, and the aspect which it now presents in the hands of Mr. Olney differs widely from its character when it first issued from the pen of its author. The two propositions which in effect President Monroe laid down were, first, that America was no longer to be looked upon as a field for European colonization; and, secondly, that Europe must not attempt to extend its political system to America, or to control the political condition of any of the American communities who had recently declared their independence. The dangers against which President Monroe thought it right to guard were not as imaginary as they would seem at the present day. The formation of the Holy Alliance; the Congresses of Laybach and Verona; the invasion of Spain by France for the purpose of forcing upon the Spanish people a form of government which seemed likely to disappear, unless it was sustained by external aid, were incidents fresh in the mind of President Monroe when he penned his celebrated Message. The system of which he speaks, and of which he so resolutely deprecates the application to the American Continent, was the system then adopted by certain powerful States upon the Continent of Europe of combining to prevent by force of arms the adoption in other countries of political institutions which they disliked, and to uphold by external pressure those which they approved. Various portions of South America had recently declared their independence, and that independence had not been recognized by the Governments of Spain and Portugal, to which, with small exception, the whole of Central and South America were nominally subject. It was not an imaginary danger that he foresaw, if he feared that the same spirit which had dictated the French expedition into Spain might inspire the more powerful Governments of Europe with the idea of imposing, by the force of European arms, upon the South American communities the form of government and the political connection which they had thrown off. In declaring that the United States would resist any such enterprise if it was contemplated, President Monroe adopted a policy which received the entire sympathy of the English Government of that date.

The dangers which were apprehended by President Monroe have no relation to the state of things in which we live at the present day. There is no danger of any Holy Alliance imposing its system upon any portion of the American Continent, and there is no danger of any European State treating any part of the American Continent as a fit object for European colonization. It is intelligible that Mr. Olney should invoke, in defence of the views on which he is now insisting, an authority which enjoys so high a popularity with his own fellow-countrymen. But the circumstances with which President Monroe was dealing, and those to which the present American Government is addressing itself, have very few features in common. Great Britain is imposing no "system" upon Venezuela, and is not concerning herself in any way with the nature of the political institutions under which the Venezuelans may prefer to live. But the British Empire and the Republic of Venezuela are neighbours, and they have differed for some time past, and continue to differ, as to the line by which their dominions are separated. It is a controversy with which the United States have no apparent practical concern. It is difficult, indeed, to see how it can materially affect any State or community outside those primarily interested, except perhaps other parts of Her Majesty's dominions, such as Trinidad. The disputed frontier of Venezuela has nothing to do with any of the questions dealt with by President Monroe. It is not a question of the colonization by a European Power of any portion of America. It is not a question of the imposition upon the communities of South America of any system of government devised in Europe. It is simply the determination of the frontier of a British possession which belonged to the Throne of England long before the Republic of Venezuela came into existence. But even if the interests of Venezuela were so far linked to those of the United States as to give to the latter a *locus standi* in this controversy, their Government apparently have not formed, and certainly do not express, any opinion upon the actual merits of the dispute. The Government of the United States do not say that Great Britain, or that Venezuela, is in the right in the matters that are in issue. But they lay down that the doctrine of President Monroe, when he opposed the imposition of European systems, or the renewal

of European colonization, confers upon them the right of demanding that when a European Power has a frontier difference with a South American community, the European Power shall consent to refer that controversy to arbitration; and Mr. Olney states that unless Her Majesty's Government accede to this demand, it will "greatly embarrass the future relations between Great Britain and the United States."

Whatever may be the authority of the doctrine laid down by President Monroe, there is nothing in his language to show that he ever thought of claiming this novel prerogative for the United States. It is admitted that he did not seek to assert a Protectorate over Mexico, or the States of Central and South America. Such a claim would have imposed upon the United States the duty of answering for the conduct of these States, and consequently the responsibility of controlling it. His sagacious foresight would have led him energetically to deprecate the addition of so serious a burden to those which the Rulers of the United States have to bear. It follows of necessity that if the Government of the United States will not control the conduct of these communities, neither can it undertake to protect them from the consequences attaching to any misconduct of which they may be guilty towards other nations. If they violate in any way the rights of another State, or of its subjects, it is not alleged that the Monroe doctrine will assure them the assistance of the United States in escaping from any reparation which they may be bound by international law to give. Mr. Olney expressly disclaims such an inference from the principles he lays down.

But the claim which he founds upon them is that, if any independent American State advances a demand for territory of which its neighbour claims to be the owner, and that neighbour is the colony of a European State, the United States have a right to insist that the European State shall submit the demand, and its own impugned rights to arbitration.

I will not now enter into a discussion of the merits of this method of terminating international differences. It has proved itself valuable in many cases; but it is not free from defects, which often operate as a serious drawback on its value. It is not always easy to find an Arbitrator who is competent, and who, at the same time, is wholly free from bias; and the task of insuring compliance with the Award when it is made is not exempt from difficulty. It is a mode of settlement of which the value varies much according to the nature of the controversy to which it is applied, and the character of the litigants who appeal to it. Whether, in any particular case, it is a suitable method of procedure is generally a delicate and difficult question. The only parties who are competent to decide that question are the two parties whose rival contentions are in issue. The claim of a third nation, which is unaffected by the controversy, to impose this particular procedure on either of the two others, cannot be reasonably justified, and has no foundation in the law of nations.

In the remarks which I have made, I have argued on the theory that the Monroe doctrine in itself is sound. I must not, however, be understood as expressing any acceptance of it on the part of Her Majesty's Government. It must always be mentioned with respect, on account of the distinguished statesman to whom it is due, and the great nation who have generally adopted it. But international law is founded on the general consent of nations; and no statesman, however eminent, and no nation, however powerful, are competent to insert into the code of international law a novel principle which was never recognized before, and which has not since been accepted by the Government of any other country. The United States have a right, like any other nation, to interpose in any controversy by which their own interests are affected; and they are the judge whether those interests are touched, and in what measure they should be sustained. But their rights are in no way strengthened or extended by the fact that the controversy affects some territory which is called American. Mr. Olney quotes the case of the recent Chilean war, in which the United States declined to join with France and England in an effort to bring hostilities to a close, on account of the Monroe doctrine. The United States were entirely in their right in declining to join in an attempt at pacification if they thought fit; but Mr. Olney's principle that "American questions are for American decision," even if it received any countenance from the language of President Monroe (which it does not), cannot be sustained by any reasoning drawn from the law of nations.

The Government of the United States is not entitled to affirm as a universal proposition, with reference to a number of independent States for whose conduct it assumes no responsibility, that its interests are necessarily concerned in whatever may befall those States simply because they are situated in the Western Hemisphere. It may well be that the interests of the United States are affected by something that happens to Chile or to Peru, and that that circumstance may give them the right of interference; but such a contingency may equally happen in the case of China or Japan, and the

right of interference is not more extensive or more assured in the one case than in the other.

Though the language of President Monroe is directed to the attainment of objects which most Englishmen would agree to be salutary, it is impossible to admit that they have been inscribed by any adequate authority in the code of international law; and the danger which such admission would involve is sufficiently exhibited both by the strange development which the doctrine has received at Mr. Olney's hands, and the arguments by which it is supported, in the despatch under reply. In defence of it he says: "That distance and 3,000 miles of intervening ocean *make any permanent political union between a European and an American State unnatural and inexpedient* will hardly be denied. But physical and geographical considerations are the least of the objections to such a union. Europe has a set of primary interests which are peculiar to herself; America is not interested in them, and ought not to be vexed or complicated with them."

And, again: "Thus far in our history we have been spared the burdens and evils of immense standing armies and all the other accessories of huge warlike establishments; and the exemption has highly contributed to our national greatness and wealth, as well as to the happiness of every citizen. But *with the Powers of Europe permanently encamped on American soil*, the ideal conditions we have thus far enjoyed cannot be expected to continue."

The necessary meaning of these words is that the union between Great Britain and Canada; between Great Britain and Jamaica and Trinidad; between Great Britain and British Honduras or British Guiana are "inexpedient and unnatural." President Monroe disclaims any such inference from his doctrine; but in this, as in other respects, Mr. Olney develops it. He lays down that the inexpedient and unnatural character of the union between a European and American State is so obvious that it "will hardly be denied." Her Majesty's Government are prepared emphatically to deny it on behalf of both the British and American people who are subject to her Crown. They maintain that the union between Great Britain and her territories in the Western Hemisphere is both natural and expedient. They fully concur with the view which President Monroe apparently entertained, that any disturbance of the existing territorial distribution in that hemisphere by any fresh acquisitions on the part of any European State would be a highly inexpedient change. But they are not prepared to admit that the recognition of that expediency is clothed with the sanction which belongs to a doctrine of international law. They are not prepared to admit that the interests of the United States are necessarily concerned in every frontier dispute which may arise between any two of the States who possess dominion in the Western Hemisphere; and still less can they accept the doctrine that the United States are entitled to claim that the process of arbitration shall be applied to any demand for the surrender of territory which one of those States may make against another.

I have commented in the above remarks only upon the general aspect of Mr. Olney's doctrines, apart from the special considerations which attach to the controversy between the United Kingdom and Venezuela in its present phase. This controversy has undoubtedly been made more difficult by the inconsiderate action of the Venezuelan Government in breaking off relations with Her Majesty's Government, and its settlement has been correspondingly delayed; but Her Majesty's Government have not surrendered the hope that it will be adjusted by a reasonable arrangement at an early date.

I request that you will read the substance of the above despatch to Mr. Olney, and leave him a copy if he desires it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 16.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir J. Pauncefote.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 26, 1895.

IN my preceding despatch of to-day's date I have replied only to the latter portion of Mr. Olney's despatch of the 20th July last, which treats of the application of the Monroe doctrine to the question of the boundary dispute between Venezuela and the colony of British Guiana. But it seems desirable, in order to remove some evident

misapprehensions as to the main features of the question, that the statement of it contained in the earlier portion of Mr. Olney's despatch should not be left without reply. Such a course will be the more convenient, because, in consequence of the suspension of diplomatic relations, I shall not have the opportunity of setting right misconceptions of this kind in the ordinary way in a despatch addressed to the Venezuelan Government itself.

Her Majesty's Government, while they have never avoided or declined argument on the subject with the Government of Venezuela, have always held that the question was one which had no direct bearing on the material interests of any other country, and have consequently refrained hitherto from presenting any detailed statement of their case either to the United States or to other foreign Governments.

It is, perhaps, a natural consequence of this circumstance that Mr. Olney's narration of what has passed bears the impress of being mainly, if not entirely, founded on *ex parte* statements emanating from Venezuela, and gives, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, an erroneous view of many material facts.

Mr. Olney commences his observations by remarking that "the dispute is of ancient date, and began at least as early as the time when Great Britain acquired by the Treaty with the Netherlands in 1814 the establishments of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. From that time to the present the dividing line between these establishments, now called British Guiana, and Venezuela has never ceased to be subject of contention."

This statement is founded on misconception. The dispute on the subject of the frontier did not, in fact, commence till after the year 1840.

The title of Great Britain to the territory in question is derived, in the first place, from conquest and military occupation of the Dutch settlements in 1796. Both on this occasion, and at the time of a previous occupation of those settlements in 1781, the British authorities marked the western boundary of their possessions as beginning some distance up the Orinoco beyond Point Barima, in accordance with the limits claimed and actually held by the Dutch, and this has always since remained the frontier claimed by Great Britain. The definitive cession of the Dutch settlements to England was, as Mr. Olney states, placed on record by the Treaty of 1814, and although the Spanish Government were parties to the negotiations which led to that Treaty, they did not at any stage of them raise objection to the frontiers claimed by Great Britain, though these were perfectly well known to them. At that time the Government of Venezuela had not been recognized even by the United States, though the province was already in revolt against the Spanish Government, and had declared its independence. No question of frontier was raised with Great Britain either by it or by the Government of the United States of Colombia, in which it became merged in 1819. That Government, indeed, on repeated occasions, acknowledged its indebtedness to Great Britain for her friendly attitude. When in 1830 the Republic of Venezuela assumed a separate existence its Government was equally warm in its expressions of gratitude and friendship, and there was not at the time any indication of an intention to raise such claims as have been urged by it during the latter portion of this century.

It is true, as stated by Mr. Olney, that, in the Venezuelan Constitution of 1830, Article 5 lays down that "the territory of Venezuela comprises all that which previously to the political changes of 1810 was denominated the Captaincy-General of Venezuela." Similar declarations had been made in the fundamental laws promulgated in 1819 and 1821.

I need not point out that a declaration of this kind made by a newly self-constituted State can have no valid force as against international arrangements previously concluded by the nation from which it has separated itself.

But the present difficulty would never have arisen if the Government of Venezuela had been content to claim only those territories which could be proved or even reasonably asserted to have been practically in the possession and under the effective jurisdiction of the Captaincy-General of Venezuela.

There is no authoritative statement by the Spanish Government of those territories, for a Decree which the Venezuelan Government allege to have been issued by the King of Spain in 1768, describing the Province of Guiana as bordered on the south by the Amazon and on the east by the Atlantic, certainly cannot be regarded as such. It absolutely ignores the Dutch settlements, which not only existed in fact, but had been formally recognized by the Treaty of Munster of 1648, and it would, if now considered valid, transfer to Venezuela the whole of the British, Dutch, and French Guianas, and an enormous tract of territory belonging to Brazil.

But of the territories claimed and actually occupied by the Dutch, which were those acquired from them by Great Britain, there exist the most authentic declarations. In

1759, and again in 1769, the States-General of Holland addressed formal remonstrances to the Court of Madrid against the incursions of the Spaniards into their posts and settlements in the basin of the Cuyuni. In these remonstrances they distinctly claimed all the branches of the Essequibo River, and especially, the Cuyuni River, as lying within Dutch territory. They demanded immediate reparation for the proceedings of the Spaniards and reinstatement of the posts said to have been injured by them, and suggested that a proper delineation between the Colony of Essequibo and the Rio Orinoco should be laid down by authority.

To this claim the Spanish Government never attempted to make any reply. But it is evident from the archives which are preserved in Spain, and to which, by the courtesy of the Spanish Government, reference has been made, that the Council of State did not consider that they had the means of rebutting it, and that neither they nor the Governor of Cumana were prepared seriously to maintain the claims which were suggested in reports from his subordinate officer, the Commandant of Guiana. These reports were characterized by the Spanish Ministers as insufficient and unsatisfactory, as "professing to show the Province of Guiana under too favourable a light," and finally by the Council of State as appearing from other information to be "very improbable." They form, however, with a map which accompanied them, the evidence on which the Venezuelan Government appear most to rely, though it may be observed that among other documents which have from time to time been produced or referred to by them in the course of the discussions is a Bull of Pope Alexander VI in 1493, which, if it is to be considered as having any present validity, would take from the Government of the United States all title to jurisdiction on the Continent of North America. The fundamental principle underlying the Venezuelan argument is, in fact, that, inasmuch as Spain was originally entitled of right to the whole of the American Continent, any territory on that Continent which she cannot be shown to have acknowledged in positive and specific terms to have passed to another Power can only have been acquired by wrongful usurpation, and if situated to the north of the Amazon and west of the Atlantic must necessarily belong to Venezuela, as her self-constituted inheritor in those regions. It may reasonably be asked whether Mr. Olney would consent to refer to the arbitration of another Power pretensions raised by the Government of Mexico on such a foundation to large tracts of territory which had long been comprised in the Federation.

The circumstances connected with the marking of what is called the "Schomburgk" line are as follows:—

In 1835 a grant was made by the British Government for the exploration of the interior of the British Colony, and Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Schomburgk, who was employed on this service, on his return to the capital of the Colony in July 1839, called the attention of the Government to the necessity for an early demarcation of its boundaries. He was in consequence appointed in November 1840 Special Commissioner for provisionally surveying and delimiting the boundaries of British Guiana, and notice of the appointment was given to the Governments concerned, including that of Venezuela.

The intention of Her Majesty's Government at that time was, when the work of the Commissioner had been completed, to communicate to the other Governments their views as to the true boundary of the British Colony, and then to settle any details to which those Governments might take objection.

It is important to notice that Sir R. Schomburgk did not discover or invent any new boundaries. He took particular care to fortify himself with the history of the case. He had further, from actual exploration and information obtained from the Indians, and from the evidence of local remains, as at Barima, and local traditions, as on the Cuyuni, fixed the limits of the Dutch possessions, and the zone from which all trace of Spanish influence was absent. On such data he based his reports.

At the very outset of his mission he surveyed Point Barima, where the remains of a Dutch fort still existed, and placed there and at the mouth of the Amacura two boundary posts. At the urgent entreaty of the Venezuelan Government these two posts were afterwards removed, as stated by Mr. Olney, but this concession was made on the distinct understanding that Great Britain did not thereby in any way abandon her claim to that position.

In submitting the maps of his survey, on which he indicated the line which he would propose to Her Majesty's Government for adoption, Sir R. Schomburgk called attention to the fact that Her Majesty's Government might justly claim the whole basin of the Cuyuni and Yuruari on the ground that the natural boundary of the Colony included any territory through which flow rivers which fall into the Essequibo. "Upon this principle," he wrote, "the boundary-line would run from the sources of the Carumani

towards the sources of the Cuyuni proper, and from thence towards its far more northern tributaries, the Rivers Iruary (Yuruari) and Iruang (Yuruan), and thus approach the very heart of Venezuelan Guiana." But, on grounds of complaisance towards Venezuela, he proposed that Great Britain should consent to surrender her claim to a more extended frontier inland in return for the formal recognition of her right to Point Barima. It was on this principle that he drew the boundary-line which has since been called by his name.

Undoubtedly, therefore, Mr. Olney is right when he states that "it seems impossible to treat the Schomburgk line as being the boundary claimed by Great Britain as matter of right, or as anything but a line originating in considerations of convenience and expediency." The Schomburgk line was in fact a great reduction of the boundary claimed by Great Britain as matter of right, and its proposal originated in a desire to come to a speedy and friendly arrangement with a weaker Power with whom Great Britain was at the time, and desired to remain, in cordial relations.

The following are the main facts of the discussions that ensued with the Venezuelan Government:—

While Mr. Schomburgk was engaged on his survey the Venezuelan Minister in London had urged Her Majesty's Government to enter into a Treaty of Limits, but received the answer that, if it should be necessary to enter into such a Treaty, a survey was, at any rate, the necessary preliminary, and that this was proceeding.

As soon as Her Majesty's Government were in possession of Mr. Schomburgk's reports, the Venezuelan Minister was informed that they were in a position to commence negotiations, and in January 1844, M. Fortique commenced by stating the claim of his Government.

This claim, starting from such obsolete grounds as the original discovery by Spain of the American Continent, and mainly supported by quotations of a more or less vague character from the writings of travellers and geographers, but adducing no substantial evidence of actual conquest or occupation of the territory claimed, demanded the Essequibo itself as the boundary of Venezuela.

A reply was returned by Lord Aberdeen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, pointing out that it would be impossible to arrive at any agreement if both sides brought forward pretensions of so extreme a character, but stating that the British Government would not imitate M. Fortique in putting forward a claim which it could not be intended seriously to maintain. Lord Aberdeen then proceeded to announce the concessions which, "out of friendly regard to Venezuela," Her Majesty's Government were prepared to make, and proposed a line starting from the mouth of the Moroco to the junction of the River Barama with the Waini, thence up the Barama to the point at which that stream approached nearest to the Acarabisi, and thence following Sir R. Schomburgk's line from the source of the Acarabisi onwards.

A condition was attached to the proffered cession, viz., that the Venezuelan Government should enter into an engagement that no portion of the territory proposed to be ceded should be alienated at any time to a foreign Power, and that the Indian tribes residing in it should be protected from oppression.

No answer to the note was ever received from the Venezuelan Government, and in 1850 Her Majesty's Government informed Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Carácas that as the proposal had remained for more than six years unaccepted, it must be considered as having lapsed, and authorized him to make a communication to the Venezuelan Government to that effect.

A report having at the time become current in Venezuela that Great Britain intended to seize Venezuelan Guiana, the British Government distinctly disclaimed such an intention, but inasmuch as the Government of Venezuela subsequently permitted projects to be set on foot for the occupation of Point Barima and certain other positions in dispute, the British Chargé d'Affaires was instructed in June 1850 to call the serious attention of the President and Government of Venezuela to the question, and to declare to them "that, whilst, on the one hand, Great Britain had no intention to occupy or encroach on the disputed territory, she would not, on the other hand, view with indifference aggressions on that territory by Venezuela."

The Venezuelan Government replied in December of the same year that Venezuela had no intention of occupying or encroaching upon any part of the territory the dominion of which was in dispute, and that orders would be issued to the authorities in Guiana to abstain from taking any steps contrary to this engagement.

This constitutes what has been termed the "Agreement of 1850," to which the Government of Venezuela have frequently appealed, but which the Venezuelans have repeatedly violated in succeeding years.

Their first acts of this nature consisted in the occupation of fresh positions to the east of their previous settlements, and the founding in 1858 of the town of Nueva Providencia on the right bank of the Yuruari, all previous settlements being on the left bank. The British Government, however, considering that these settlements were so near positions which they had not wished to claim, considering also the difficulty of controlling the movements of mining populations, overlooked this breach of the Agreement.

The Governor of the Colony was in 1857 sent to Carácas to negotiate for a settlement of the boundary, but he found the Venezuelan State in so disturbed a condition that it was impossible to commence negotiations, and eventually he came away without having effected anything.

For the next nineteen years, as stated by Mr. Olney, the civil commotions in Venezuela prevented any resumption of negotiations.

In 1876 it was reported that the Venezuelan Government had, for the second time, broken "the Agreement of 1850" by granting licences to trade and cut wood in Barima and eastward. Later in the same year that Government once more made an overture for the settlement of the boundary. Various delays interposed before negotiations actually commenced; and it was not till 1879 that Señor Rojaz began them with a renewal of the claim to the Essequibo as the eastern boundary of Venezuelan Guiana. At the same time he stated that his Government wished "to obtain, by means of a Treaty, a definitive settlement of the question, and was disposed to proceed to the demarcation of the divisional line between the two Guianas in a spirit of conciliation and true friendship towards Her Majesty's Government."

In reply to this communication, a note was addressed to Señor Rojaz on the 10th January, 1880, reminding him that the boundary which Her Majesty's Government claimed, as a matter of strict right on grounds of conquest and concession by Treaty, commenced at a point at the mouth of the Orinoco, westward of Point Barima, that it proceeded thence in a southerly direction to the Imataca Mountains, the line of which it followed to the north-west, passing from thence by the high land of Santa Maria just south of the town of Upata, until it struck a range of hills on the eastern bank of the Caroni River, following these southwards until it struck the great backbone of the Guiana district, the Roraima Mountains of British Guiana, and thence southwards to the Pacaraima Mountains. On the other hand, the claim which had been put forward on behalf of Venezuela by General Guzman Blanco in his Message to the National Congress of the 20th February, 1877, would involve the surrender of a province now inhabited by 40,000 British subjects, and which had been in the uninterrupted possession of Holland and of Great Britain successively for two centuries. The difference between these two claims being so great, it was pointed out to Señor Rojaz that, in order to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement, each party must be prepared to make very considerable concessions to the other, and he was assured that, although the claim of Venezuela to the Essequibo River boundary could not, under any circumstances, be entertained, yet that Her Majesty's Government were anxious to meet the Venezuelan Government in a spirit of conciliation, and would be willing, in the event of a renewal of negotiations for the general settlement of boundaries, to waive a portion of what they considered to be their strict rights if Venezuela were really disposed to make corresponding concessions on her part.

The Venezuelan Minister replied in February 1881 by proposing a line which commenced on the coast a mile to the north of the Moroco River, and followed certain parallels and meridians inland, bearing a general resemblance to the proposal made by Lord Aberdeen in 1844.

Señor Rojaz' proposal was referred to the Lieutenant-Governor and Attorney-General of British Guiana, who were then in England, and they presented an elaborate Report, showing that in the thirty-five years which had elapsed since Lord Aberdeen's proposed concession natives and others had settled in the territory under the belief that they would enjoy the benefits of British rule, and that it was impossible to assent to any such concessions as Señor Rojaz' line would involve. They, however, proposed an alternative line, which involved considerable reductions of that laid down by Sir R. Schomburgk.

This boundary was proposed to the Venezuelan Government by Lord Granville in September 1881, but no answer was ever returned by that Government to the proposal.

While, however, the Venezuelan Minister constantly stated that the matter was under active consideration, it was found that in the same year a Concession had been given by his Government to General Pulgar, which included a large portion of the

territory in dispute. This was the third breach by Venezuela of the Agreement of 1850.

Early in 1884 news arrived of a fourth breach by Venezuela of the Agreement of 1850, through two different grants which covered the whole of the territory in dispute, and as this was followed by actual attempts to settle on the disputed territory, the British Government could no longer remain inactive.

Warning was therefore given to the Venezuelan Government and to the concessionnaires, and a British Magistrate was sent into the threatened district to assert the British rights.

Meanwhile, the negotiations for a settlement of the boundary had continued, but the only replies that could be obtained from Señor Guzman Blanco, the Venezuelan Minister, were proposals for arbitration in different forms, all of which Her Majesty's Government were compelled to decline as involving a submission to the Arbitrator of the claim advanced by Venezuela in 1844 to all territory up to the left bank of the Essequibo.

As the progress of settlement by British subjects made a decision of some kind absolutely necessary, and as the Venezuelan Government refused to come to any reasonable arrangement, Her Majesty's Government decided not to repeat the offer of concessions which had not been reciprocated, but to assert their undoubted right to the territory within the Schomburgk line, while still consenting to hold open for further negotiation, and even for arbitration, the unsettled lands between that line and what they considered to be the rightful boundary, as stated in the note to Señor Rojaz of the 10th January, 1880.

The execution of this decision was deferred for a time, owing to the return of Señor Guzman Blanco to London, and the desire of Lord Rosebery, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to settle all pending questions between the two Governments. Mr. Olney is mistaken in supposing that in 1886 "a Treaty was practically agreed upon containing a general arbitration clause, under which the parties might have submitted the boundary dispute to the decision of a third Power, or of several Powers in amity with both." It is true that General Guzman Blanco proposed that the Commercial Treaty between the two countries should contain a clause of this nature, but it had reference to *future* disputes only. Her Majesty's Government have always insisted on a separate discussion of the frontier question, and have considered its settlement to be a necessary preliminary to other arrangements. Lord Rosebery's proposal made in July 1886 was "that the two Governments should agree to consider the territory lying between the boundary-lines respectively proposed in the 8th paragraph of Señor Rojaz' note of the 21st February, 1881, and in Lord Granville's note of the 15th September, 1881, as the territory in dispute between the two countries, and that a boundary-line within the limits of this territory should be traced either by an Arbitrator or by a Joint Commission on the basis of an equal division of this territory, due regard being had to natural boundaries."

Señor Guzman Blanco replied declining the proposal, and repeating that arbitration, on the whole claim of Venezuela, was the only method of solution which he could suggest. This pretension is hardly less exorbitant than would be a refusal by Great Britain to agree to an arbitration on the boundary of British Columbia and Alaska, unless the United States would consent to bring into question one-half of the whole area of the latter territory. He shortly afterwards left England, and as there seemed no hope of arriving at an agreement by further discussions, the Schomburgk line was proclaimed as the irreducible boundary of the Colony in October 1886. It must be borne in mind that in taking this step Her Majesty's Government did not assert anything approaching their extreme claim, but confined themselves within the limits of what had as early as 1840 been suggested as a concession out of friendly regard and complaisance.

When Señor Guzman Blanco, having returned to Venezuela, announced his intention of erecting a lighthouse at Point Barima, the British Government expressed their readiness to permit this if he would enter into a formal written agreement that its erection would not be held to prejudice their claim to the site.

In the meanwhile, the Venezuelan Government had sent Commissioners into the territory to the east of the Schomburgk line, and on their return two notes were addressed to the British Minister at Carácas, dated respectively the 26th and 31st January, 1887, demanding the evacuation of the whole territory held by Great Britain from the mouth of the Orinoco to the Pomeroon River, and adding that should this not be done by the 20th February, and should the evacuation not be accompanied by the acceptance of arbitration as the means of deciding the pending frontier question,

diplomatic relations would be broken off. In pursuance of this decision the British Representative at Carácas received his passports, and relations were declared by the Venezuelan Government to be suspended on the 21st February, 1887.

In December of that year, as a matter of precaution, and in order that the claims of Great Britain beyond the Schomburgk line might not be considered to have been abandoned, a notice was issued by the Governor of British Guiana formally reserving those claims. No steps have, however, at any time been taken by the British authorities to exercise jurisdiction beyond the Schomburgk line, nor to interfere with the proceedings of the Venezuelans in the territory outside of it, although, pending a settlement of the dispute, Great Britain cannot recognize those proceedings as valid, or as conferring any legitimate title.

The question has remained in this position ever since; the bases on which Her Majesty's Government were prepared to negotiate for its settlement were clearly indicated to the Venezuelan Plenipotentiaries who were successively dispatched to London in 1890, 1891, and 1893 to negotiate for a renewal of diplomatic relations, but as on those occasions the only solutions which the Venezuelan Government professed themselves ready to accept would still have involved the submission to arbitration of the Venezuelan claim to a large portion of the British Colony, no progress has yet been made towards a settlement.

It will be seen from the preceding statement that the Government of Great Britain have from the first held the same view as to the extent of territory which they are entitled to claim as a matter of right. It comprised the coast-line up to the River Amacura, and the whole basin of the Essequibo River and its tributaries. A portion of that claim, however, they have always been willing to waive altogether; in regard to another portion, they have been and continue to be perfectly ready to submit the question of their title to arbitration. As regards the rest, that which lies within the so-called Schomburgk line, they do not consider that the rights of Great Britain are open to question. Even within that line they have, on various occasions, offered to Venezuela considerable concessions as a matter of friendship and conciliation, and for the purpose of securing an amicable settlement of the dispute. If as time has gone on the concessions thus offered diminished in extent, and have now been withdrawn, this has been the necessary consequence of the gradual spread over the country of British settlements, which Her Majesty's Government cannot in justice to the inhabitants offer to surrender to foreign rule, and the justice of such withdrawal is amply borne out by the researches in the national archives of Holland and Spain, which have furnished further and more convincing evidence in support of the British claims.

The discrepancies in the frontiers assigned to the British Colony in various maps published in England, and erroneously assumed to be founded on official information, are easily accounted for by the circumstances which I have mentioned. Her Majesty's Government cannot, of course, be responsible for such publications made without their authority.

Although the negotiations in 1890, 1891, and 1893 did not lead to any result, Her Majesty's Government have not abandoned the hope that they may be resumed with better success, and that when the internal politics of Venezuela are settled on a more durable basis than has lately appeared to be the case, her Government may be enabled to adopt a more moderate and conciliatory course in regard to this question than that of their predecessors. Her Majesty's Government are sincerely desirous of being in friendly relations with Venezuela, and certainly have no design to seize territory that properly belongs to her, or forcibly to extend sovereignty over any portion of her population.

They have, on the contrary, repeatedly expressed their readiness to submit to arbitration the conflicting claims of Great Britain and Venezuela to large tracts of territory which from their auriferous nature are known to be of almost untold value. But they cannot consent to entertain, or to submit to the arbitration of another Power or of foreign jurists, however eminent, claims based on the extravagant pretensions of Spanish officials in the last century, and involving the transfer of large numbers of British subjects, who have for many years enjoyed the settled rule of a British Colony, to a nation of different race and language, whose political system is subject to frequent disturbance, and whose institutions as yet too often afford very inadequate protection to life and property. No issue of this description has ever been involved in the questions which Great Britain and the United States have consented to submit to arbitration, and Her Majesty's Government are convinced that in similar circumstances the Government of the United States would be equally firm in declining to entertain proposals of such a nature.

Your Excellency is authorized to state the substance of this despatch to Mr. Olney, and to leave him a copy of it if he should desire it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 17.

Sir J. Pauncefote to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received December* 7.)

(Telegraphic.) *Washington, December* 7, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to report that, in compliance with the instruction contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 5th instant, I this morning read to the Secretary of State your Lordship's two despatches on the subject of the Venezuelan boundary which I received yesterday evening, and that I left in his hands copies of those despatches.

No. 18.

Mr. Bayard to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 4.)

Embassy of the United States, London,
My Lord, *February* 3, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I am instructed by the Secretary of State of the United States to make known to your Lordship that a Commission to investigate and report upon the true divisional line between the Republic of Venezuela and British Guiana has, under the authority of the Congress, been appointed by the President of the United States, which Commission is now in session at Washington, and has chosen Mr. Justice Brewer, of the Supreme Court of the United States, as its President.

Through its President, this Commission has suggested to the Secretary of State that, being distinctly and in no view an arbitral Tribunal, but having its duty limited to a diligent and careful ascertainment of the facts touching the territory referred to and in dispute for the information of the President, it would be grateful for such assistance to that end as could be obtained by the friendly co-operation and aid of the Governments of Great Britain and Venezuela.

Wherefore I beg leave to make application to your Lordship that, if entirely consistent with your sense of international propriety, the Commission may be furnished with such documentary proof, historical narrative, unpublished archives, or other evidence as may be within the power of Her Majesty's Government, as well as for any facilities which may conveniently be extended to assist the Commission in the purposes of its institution.

In communicating these wishes of the Commission to the Secretary of State, its President states :—

"It is scarcely necessary to say that if either Great Britain or Venezuela should deem it proper to designate an Agent or Attorney, whose duty it would be to see that no such proofs were omitted or overlooked, the Commission would be grateful for such evidence of good-will, and for the valuable results which would be likely to follow therefrom. Either party making a favourable response to the wish so expressed by the President of the Commission would of course be considered only as *amicus curiæ*, and to throw light upon difficult and complex questions of fact."

The purposes of the investigation proposed by the Commission are certainly hostile to none—nor can it be of advantage to any that the effort to procure the desired information should fail of its purpose—the sole concern of the United States being the peaceful solution of a controversy between two friendly Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. F. BAYARD.

No. 19.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Bayard.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, February* 7, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Excellency's letter of the 3rd instant.

Any information which is at the command of Her Majesty's Government upon any subject of inquiry that is occupying the attention of the Government of the United States will be readily placed at the disposal of the President.

Her Majesty's Government are at present collecting the documents which refer to the boundary questions that have for some years been discussed between Great Britain and Venezuela, in order that they may be presented to Parliament. As soon as the collection is complete, and ready for press, Her Majesty's Government will have great pleasure in forwarding advance copies to your Excellency.

I have, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 20.

Mr. Bayard to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 11.)

Embassy of the United States, London,

My Lord, *February* 10, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's note, dated the 7th instant, and to thank you for the prompt and courteous response to the desire expressed by me, under instructions and on behalf of my Government, to receive documentary and other historical information in relation to the boundary questions so long under discussion between Great Britain and Venezuela.

I shall await with great interest the promised transmission of advanced copies of the completed collection of documents relating to the subject referred to, and, with assurances of the appreciation of my Government of the courtesy thus bestowed, I have, &c.

(Signed) T. F. BAYARD.

CORRESPONDENCE respecting the Question of the Boundary of British Guiana.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty. February 1896.

LONDON:
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